TEN CENTS A COPY

The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Words as Nuisances

WHEN is a word a nuisance? The *Manchester Guardian* has been trying to find out by offering a prize for the best list of ten words that can be so regarded, and the results of the competition, to judge from the editorial pronouncement of the paper upon it, are interesting. Certain of the words which seem to have aroused the most violent objections on the part of British purists are already in the index expurgatorious of any journals pretending to nicety of expression, while others it would be hard to get any jury of writers to agree upon. Some of them are newly created, like "hiker," which seems to have come in for particular disapproval, some are scientific terms taken over into common parlance, like "complex," "subconscious," or "neurotic," and others are words like "vital," "creative," "colossal," or "unique," whose misuse and over-use have brought them into disfavor.

It is, of course, next to impossible to lay down generalizations as to what constitutes a word a nuisance and what preserves its value. For it may be deserving of all condemnation when used by one writer and of exceeding great praise when employed by another. With words as with clothes, a style may be good until its adoption by the wrong person, or by too many persons, makes it bad.

In what, indeed, lies the difference between distinguished literary composition and merely competent writing? Is it not, at least in part, that in the one case familiar words are made to display fresh meanings, that they discover a magic by the use of which hidden qualities in what they describe are suddenly revealed, and that in the other they carry nothing but the most commonplace implications? The best writing does not produce its effects by searching out the old, the obsolete, or the esoteric word, but by employing a vocabulary the power of which rests in the nice precision of meaning which its every part is made to yield and in the fine distinctions which its carefully shaded epithet is able to convey. Good writing charms both by virtue of the felicity with which it uses the unexpected and the surprising word and of the freshness with which it uses the familiar one. Young writers especially are wont to ignore this and, because of their usualness, to distrust some of the most admirable words in the language instead of realizing that no word is so customary but that nice application and happy marriage to other words can lend it distinction and dignity.

When the *Manchester Guardian* contestants proscribe such words as "repression," "absolutely," pseudo," or picturesque," they are entering a protest, of course, not against their use but against their misuse. They are making, perhaps, unwitting acknowledgment of the fact that it is the very strength of words that sometimes constitutes their weakness. Certain words, and certain types of words, gain wide currency precisely because in their original application by some adept in language they so exactly define their objects that they are immediately taken over by the many who are inexpert at description and are so commonly and constantly employed that they degenerate into platitudes. No one needs to be told how apt slang may appear in its freshness, how apt in fact it is, and how quickly repetition, and extension of its meaning where its meaning does not properly apply, rob it of vigor. The same process holds of words in general. Fortunately, as the *Manchester Guardian* remarks, "one realizes that nuisances, like all things, have their day, and the hour that sees them as nuisances attain their zenith marks the beginning of a drop." Given time, and we may yet recover for literature "cult" and "temperamental," and "dramatic." In the meanwhile, out upon them! They are indisputably nuisances.

Three Swans

By EDWARD DAVISON

FROM a train window—it may have been Virginia
Or further South—a stranger, early wakened
By jolt of brakes and the loud-belling engine,
I saw three swans, white on the dark water
Under a green bank, indolently gliding.
The day looked windless-gray and the sky stormy.
They, unperturbed and imperturbable, shone
In their fixed world serenely: though our clamor
Shook the near trees it had not shaken them.
Then they were gone! Who launched them there,
I wondered,
To flash their alabaster from the willows
On men like me, day-dreaming in the club-car?
Was it some rich man whose half-pride, half pleasure
Turned to new whims long since, and they, forgotten,
Haunt his dark pool, unvisited but content?
Or a young girl who never heard of Leda?
Rain or shine she comes herself to feed them,
Scattering gold sweet-corn-bread in the shallows,
And they all abreast sailing cross the water
Slowly, proud as queens at a queen's banquet,
Or climb the bank to eat from her white hand.
One yields his velvet snow to her caresses,
She feels the strong wings stir under her fingers,
And, in herself, a faint bewildering tremor,
Some touch of the unknown, a sudden heartache.
Poor innocent! Yet she returns tomorrow
To feel again that sweet mysterious trouble.
Or was it some proud immigrant long ago,
Sick in his old age for the land that wronged him,
Jefferson's friend? He robbed the moat at Windsor,
Plotting and bribing with a young sea-captain
To stock America with the King's best brood;
And so, poaching his cygnets over an ocean,
He set them out to breed without a licence.
Praised be the theft! They still are royal birds.
Whoever it was that gave them to the landscape,
Dead or alive, these verses go to thank him.
Would I had met him on his own plantation
To talk in understanding praise of swans,
Not least of their eternal unconcern.

This Week

"A Richer Dust."
Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT.

"Mexico."
Reviewed by ERNEST GRUENING.

"Alexander," "Caesar," "Nero," "Alaric."
Reviewed by ALFRED R. BELLINGER.

Pegasus Perplexing: A Charade Contest.

Star-Dust from Mrs. Thrale.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Prelude.
By CONRAD AIKEN.

Next Week, or Later

John Keats.
By J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

Milton Complete*

By ALEXANDER M. WITHERSPOON
Yale University

IT is a little over a hundred years since Macaulay wrote his great essay on Milton, that essay which effectively crystallized nineteenth century opinion of the poet, and best expressed its homage to him. The occasion of Macaulay's essay was the publication of a translation of Milton's "De Doctrina Christiana," one of his lesser prose works. Macaulay was given, as everyone knows, to using slight occasions as opportunities for great discussions, and almost any text could become with him the pretext for a monumental essay. But if the undistinguished translation of this minor Latin work moved him to such eloquence on behalf of Milton, one wonders to what still greater heights he might have risen could he have reviewed the first two volumes of the great Columbia "Milton" which have this year been given to an expectant world. Here is all the poetry of our great poet, printed at last in a manner worthy of its greatness, in an edition which, for scholarship and typography, for beauty and convenience, for scope and completeness, is a fit medium for that song

> That with no middle flight intends to soar
> Above th' Aonian Mount, while it pursues
> Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime.

It is such an edition as would have delighted the artistic and fastidious poet himself, who labored always to make his work perfect in his great Taskmaster's eye, and who was not at all careless of its physical appearance. One calls to mind the sardonic joke which he played on William Marshall, who had produced such a travesty of a portrait for the 1645 edition of the poems, and his care, in the case of his prose, to note in his "Faults Escaped in the Printing" even the omission of a comma.

There is a spaciousness, a leisureliness, a lack of haste, and a thoroughness about the Columbia "Milton" which are truly Miltonic, a suggestion of Milton's own "long choosing and beginning late." The first two volumes, which have appeared after twenty-five years of planning and preparation, are in four parts. There are to be sixteen volumes more, and it is proposed to conclude the edition in 1936. Those who know what the preparation of such an edition entails upon its editors will not need to be told, and none others will appreciate, the magnitude of the task. To W. P. Trent, its chief begetter, and to Professor Frank A. Patterson, of Columbia, are due special honors for bringing it into existence. It is characteristic of Milton and of his century that the poems should include verse in Latin, Greek, and Italian, as well as English. The Greek and Latin pieces have been translated by Mr. Charles Knapp, and the Italian verse by Mr. Arthur Livingston. Professor Patterson is the editor of the English poems, Mr. Livingston of the Italian, and Mr. Trent and Mr. T. O. Mabbott of the Latin and Greek. The format, the printing, and the binding are, happily, the work of William Edwin Rudge.

In succeeding volumes there will be, in addition to the major prose works, Milton's letters, his marginal notes in books which he read, and indeed everything that came from his pen or his lips so far as it is humanly possible to procure it. A concluding volume will contain certain doubtful pieces and a bibliography of his works. The edition is, therefore, the complete Milton, and, with the exception of the translations and the textual notes, completely Milton. The editors have wisely kept themselves and their opinions,

* THE WORKS OF JOHN MILTON. New York: Columbia University Press. Vols. I and II, in two parts each. $10 per vol. Complete set of 18 vols. in 21, $105.

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as well as the opinions of others, out of the work. There is no "memorial introduction" of the Grosart type, and the reader must look elsewhere for biographical information. The curious student who seeks for light on "that two-handed engine at the door," or for a discussion of the provenance of "the star that bids the shepherd fold" will not find them. Here is the text of Milton's works in verse and prose, complete, and, with a very few exceptions, as authentic and perfect as Milton could have wished it. Make what you will of it.

The editors have quoted appropriately at the head of the first volume Macaulay's estimate and summary of Milton's character and achievements. It was Macaulay, I think we may say, who in effect introduced to the nineteenth century a new Milton, the Milton who was a great statesman, patriot and thinker, and perhaps the greatest votary of personal liberty that the English race has ever produced. Milton the poet had, indeed, been known and admired as an Olympian and "the third among the sons of light" for a century and a half. Wordsworth had voiced at the turn of the century the wish that the great poet might be living at that darkest hour of England's history, and four years before the essay Shelley in "Adonais" had invoked anew the lamentations of that most musical of mourners and apostle of liberty. Macaulay was not lacking in praise and appreciation of Milton's poetry, but it was Milton the man, and especially Milton the patriot and statesman, that he held up as an example and a portent. He was the first to draw the attention of the nineteenth century to the wisdom and appositeness of Milton's great prose treatises, styling them enthusiastically "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies," and "a perfect field of cloth of gold." Milton had said that in writing prose he had the use as it were only of his left hand, but it was, after all, the left hand of Milton. And Macaulay wished to hold up this left hand, like Hur at the side of another Moses, that it might once again bring strength and inspiration to the forces of right and light, and discomfit the Amalekites.

* * *

Macaulay regretted that Milton's prose should be so inaccessible and so little known. Since his day it available on the same generous scale as that of the verse. To many it will doubtless come as a surprise that Milton's prose bulks over seven times as large as his poetry, but those who know the real Milton know how much of himself he put into his pamphlets and remonstrances, and how indebted we are to them for many of the details necessary to a complete picture of John Milton.

It would be too much to say that Macaulay introduced a new era in the criticism and appreciation of Milton, but it is not an overstatement that he anticipated the judgment of the twentieth century toward Milton. The present generation has reversed many of Macaulay's decisions and declined to accept many of his judgments, notably in the cases of Johnson and Boswell, of the Cavaliers and the Restoration Wits. With all of these he had scant sympathy, and he treated them with something less than justice. But the opinion of the present day is still in substantial agreement with his judgment of Milton. It is Milton according to the flesh rather than Milton *sub specie æternitatis ac divinitatis* that engages our attention, and it is the economic, social, and political circumstances which helped to fashion him and his works, as well as more purely literary considerations, that made him one of the great figures of the race.

It was once the habit to call Milton a Puritan and to let it go at that. But no such general term is valid any longer. How little they know of Milton who only the Puritan in him know! It is as a child of the Renaissance that he chiefly interests the modern world, and in such recent studies as those of Saurat and Tillyard he has become a focal point in the history of the Renaissance and its late harvest in England. The Columbia "Milton" will offer ample evidence of the truth of the oft-quoted statement that of all men Milton was least qualified to turn Puritan, in the ordinary sense of the word. The terms Cavalier and Puritan have both been badly misused of late, and their historical significance has been almost forgotten. Milton's temperament was by nature what most men now call Cavalier. He was naturally an esthete, a voluptuary, and no English poet who has left records of his life as he lived it has shown himself to be more susceptible to all that the senses may know of beauty and pleasure. Warmth of affection, charm of manner, and attractiveness of personality are qualities not traditionally associated with Milton, but as the older tradition yields to the newer study of the man he emerges as a singularly lovable and human personality whom "bitter constraint and sad occasion" forced too early and too often into occupations and accents which he would not naturally have chosen. If he kept himself "pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free," it was not because he lacked all the human components which make most men otherwise.

* * *

Milton's relations with and attitude towards other men and women are also coming to be viewed in a new and different light. Dr. Johnson, with singular disregard of the facts in the case and in keeping with his prejudice against Milton, declared, for instance, that "Paradise Lost" contains little that is applicable to human interests, and Wordsworth a generation later wrote, for quite different reasons, the impressive but equally untrue words that Milton's soul was like a star and dwelt apart. But one may well ask if there is a single work of Milton's that does not concern itself with some important and pressing problem of human welfare. A fresh examination of his writings will show that there are few problems that man has to solve, whether for this world or for that which is to come, that Milton has not dealt with. Love, marriage, divorce, free will, personal liberty, the despotic use of power, the right to revolt, censorship, government by proscription, education, religion, art, poetry, music—what is there that he has left untouched? And which other of our great authors has so thoroughly and so constantly adopted for himself the Terentian rule of *nihil humani alienum?* It may with much force be argued that his Satan is the greatest character that English poetry or fiction has ever produced—if not the greatest, surely the most magnificently, tragically human figure in our literature.

Nor, as has so often been assumed, does Milton's concern with human nature have to do entirely or chiefly with man as an immortal soul, a citizen of the City of God, and a mere factor in theological problems. It is man and woman in this world, and man's happiness here and now, that he makes his theme. Milton's God has been traditionally disliked as an tions of seventeenth century Protestant theology and the spirit of the time did not permit either a sentimentally amiable portrait of God the Father or the resolution of the Almighty into a cosmic force or a mathematical formula. But the "Paradise Lost" as well as the earlier tractates, if they be well read, testify to the existence of a God who, whatever else He may be, is the Father and Creator of man, and the champion of his happiness in this world as well as in heaven. Man, in both Milton's poetry and prose, is the very centre of the cosmos, and his appearance in it, one may say, is that divine event toward which the whole creation has been moving. He is the favorite and the darling of God; all the powers of heaven and all the devils of hell consider him worth their attention, and his abode, the happy garden, becomes the battleground of the forces of good and evil. Many readers of today are likely to find much of the spirit and most of the letter of Milton's theology, like that of Dante, unconvincing, but the essential excellence of neither Dante nor Milton is thereby impaired. If it is a question of God, who was ever less inclined than Milton to limit and confine to any particular form that "bright effluence of bright essence increate"? If of heaven and hell—though as a poet he portrayed the physical aspects of both—Milton offers perhaps the most satisfactory statement of the situation:

> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n.

The publication of this complete edition of Milton comes at a time when many of the problems he faced are agitating men's minds more than they have at any time since his day. It has been remarked that there is hardly a question that is alive and pressing for settlement in the world of today that was not vexing the world of the seventeenth century. Macaulay found Milton's discussions pertinent to conditions existing a hundred years ago, and a century more of time has unfortunately not made them less apposite to the problems of England and America. There are some half a dozen matters which have during the present year especially agitated the minds of both continents, calling forth papal encyclicals, ecclesiastical resolutions, governmental pronouncements, columns of editorial comment, and unlimited discussion, and which seem as far from solution as ever,—the question of the relations of the State and the individual citizen, of the Church and the individual, of the State and the Church, of the theory and the practice of censorship, of the scope and aims of education, the problems of marriage and the question of divorce. On all these Milton had very definite views, and what he said is still worth heeding.

His "Tenure of Kings and Magistrates" might almost have served as the inspiration of the Declaration of Independence, and today, as has been recently said, if one will substitute for "king" the word "millionaire" or the title of some other of our rulers, the document is still a tract for the times. There is his "Letter on Education," and when one has made allowances for all the differences between the circumstances and requirements of sons of English gentlemen in the seventeenth century and those of sons and daughters of Englishmen and Americans in the twentieth, the general principles of Milton's tractate still remain sound and unassailable. Milton himself, were he living at this hour, would not prescribe the exact curriculum and the identical methods which he advocated for a selected group of youths in 1644, but has the end and aim, the be-all and end-all, of the education of youth ever been better stated than in his own words: "I call therefore a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices both private and public of peace and war"? Dr. Johnson insisted that Milton was legislating herein for a college of young Miltons, and it must be confessed that the author of "Paradise Lost" always paid man the compliment of considering him but little lower than the angels. But in a day like ours, when the tendency is to lower educational standards almost beyond the point of visibility, Milton's program for the youth of his day should prove a healthy reminder of heights that once were scaled and of standards that might well again be rallied to.

* * *

"The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce" was set forth three hundred years ago, but have the laws and statutes which govern marriage in the twentieth century yet attained unto the system of morality and the more of the soul and spirit than of the body. Mental and spiritual incompatibility, as well as physical incompetence, it declares, should abrogate and in effect does abrogate wedlock, since it renders the chief purpose of the union impossible of achievement; that marriage was instituted for man, and not man for marriage. Time and change have made obsolete and inapplicable some of the details of Milton's argument, but with his conclusions no intelligent man or woman can fail to be impressed. Perhaps Milton's views are still too revolutionary for such a world and for such beings as we. Russia is the only country of the civilized world, I believe, where self-determined incompatibility is ample ground for divorce, which may be self-imposed. But as a contribution to the discussion of a universally perplexing social question the "Doctrine and Discipline" should be known to all intelligent people. And throughout all of it runs the increasing Miltonic purpose of securing the maximum of freedom and happiness for the individual man and woman, and releasing them from the thraldom of a tyrannical and unjust law: "I doubt not but with one gentle stroking to wipe away ten thousand tears out of the life of man."

It is chiefly in the "Areopagitica," an address to the Parliament of England for the liberty of unlicensed printing, that Milton's words come home, or should come home, to the England and America of 1931. It should be prescribed reading for all those in authority and all those who advocate censorship in any form. It is the most thorough and eloquent answer in the language to those who would make saints by act of Parliament, or sober men and women by constitutional amendment; and a standing rebuke to those who set themselves up as rulers and governors of other men's reading and writing and eating and drinking. The particular circumstances under which the speech was written may be different, but the principles which he lays down were never more applicable than now.

> Wholesome meats to a vitiated stomach differ little or nothing from unwholesome; and best books to a naughty mind are not unapplyable to occasions of evil. . . . He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered vir-

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tue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary. . . . If every action which is good or evil in man at ripe years were to be under pittance and prescription and compulsion, what were virtue but a name, what praise could be then due to well-doing, what gramercy to be sober, just, or continent? . . . when God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing. . . . Banish all objects of lust, shut up all youth into the severest discipline that can be exercised in any heritage, ye cannot make them chaste that came not thither so. . . . And were I the chooser, a dram of well-doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hindrance of evil-doing. For God sure esteems the growth and completing of one virtuous person more than the restraint of ten vicious.

It would be hard to over-estimate the timeliness of Milton's discussion of the evils and absurdities which censorship, proscription, and prohibition bring with them—the danger of forgetting the end in the elaborate attention to the means of enforcing the law, the preoccupation with the mint and anise and cummin of technicalities, and the neglect of weightier matters. Matthew Arnold stigmatized the Puritans as "fanatics of the *what*, neglecters of the *why*." The Puritanism of John Milton was assuredly of another stripe.

It is too much to expect that the twentieth century will give its days and nights to the study of Milton. One of his successors in the poetic tradition at Cambridge has doubtless spoken for this generation in declaring that

> Malt does more than Milton can
> To justify God's ways to man,

and our ears are not attuned to the wave-length of Miltonic prose and rhyme. But the editors of the Columbia "Milton" have seen to it that we shall have a complete and authentic edition of his works to turn to whenever we feel so disposed. Principal Caird of Balliol was visited on his deathbed by his friend, Bishop Gore, who found him reading St. Augustine's "Confessions." The old man turned to Dr. Gore and remarked, "Whatever the philosophers may say about the answers this man gave to the problems he raised, they must admit that he asked the right questions." Of Milton it must be said that he, too, asked the right questions about man's duty and his destiny, and if the publication of this new edition of his works can, by turning our minds again to Milton, cause us to ask the questions that he asked, and as honestly try to answer them, the editors will not have labored in vain.

A Yorkshire Sage

A RICHER DUST. By STORM JAMESON. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THIS volume brings to a conclusion the trilogy of a Yorkshire ship-building family that was begun in "The Lovely Ship" and continued in "The Voyage Home." The completed work suggests a comparison with "The Forsyte Saga," for although "The Lovely Ship" is almost fifty years earlier in setting than "The Man of Property," the general course of both trilogies is the same; each begins with a group of characters firmly convinced of the supreme value of private property, the rightness of *laissez-faire*, and the authority of a rigid moral code that did not prohibit commercial piracy and domestic cruelty; and each traces the rise of a generation that has let go all these convictions, that tries to be kinder and more tolerant, but without any such clear idea of how to accomplish its aims as the Victorians had. And in both the character who most wins admiration and affection is the Victorian protagonist—Soames Forsyte or Mary Hervey—insular, prejudiced, outspoken, strong-willed, and stout-hearted.

"A Richer Dust" shows old Mary Hervey faced for the first time with difficulties that are too much for her. She has always hated change; she resisted the introduction of steam and of iron ships, and the rise of the workmen's unions; but her native common sense warned her when resistance was useless, and she made excellent terms for herself with the innovations, and kept her own way in spite of them. But now the whole of time and the world are against her; the grandson on whom she had counted as an heir fights through the war, and comes out with the common feeling that there is not much in the world that is worth while, and certainly money-making with the way made quite easy beforehand is not. Mary's own prejudices, which have served her well, lead her astray at last; she has a granddaughter, the child of a daughter of whose marriage she disapproved, who might take her place, being just such a forceful girl as she herself was at eighteen; but partly from resentment at her daughter's marriage and partly from the conviction of her generation that women are worthless creatures, Mary will not give her her chance. Before she dies, Mary Hervey sees the firm pass into the hands of strangers, and is put to it to know what to do with the fortune she has made; but she does not pity herself, and in your admiration you cannot find room to pity her.

So long as Mary is on the stage, she commands the keenest interest. One's attention is so centered on her that although when at the end she dies she leaves the affairs of the minor characters in the greatest confusion, one does not even ask what becomes of them, as one loses interest in the invasion of Denmark after the death of Hamlet. But too much of the book is Hamlet without the prince; Mary is too often absent for chapters at a time, and among her puzzled, uncertain grandchildren there is none who can absorb our minds as she can. In much of "A Richer Dust," reading it after its predecessors, one feels the same disappointment that one felt in "To Let" after "The Man of Property." It is quite unfair to blame the author; it is the aim of the earlier books to present a picture of a consistent, unified

JOHN MILTON IN HIS YOUTH.

society, and of their sequels to portray a world that cannot tell where it would like to go; and, what is perhaps more important, the earlier society one can see in perspective, the present one cannot. We can now appraise the virtues and failings of the Victorians, and will accept Mary Hervey and Soames as typical, we can only hope that Fleur and Mary's grandson Nicholas Roxby, who drifts into the antique business because he cannot make up his mind what he wants to do, and allows his life to be shaped by an infatuation for a woman whom he must perceive to be nothing, are not equally representative of us.

Time will tell how Miss Jameson has served the present generation; it is certain that she has done well by the past. All the strength and weakness of the Manchester School is here (and when Mary pulls down the poster announcing that her firm believes in Service, one feels that the Manchester School has still something to teach us); it gives a remarkable understanding of one of the most important phases of nineteenth century England.

The original manuscript of Sir Walter Scott's unfinished and unpublished novel, "The Siege of Malta," has just been privately purchased from General Maxwell-Scott by Gabriel Wells of New York. Scott intended it as the last of the Waverly Novels, and this manuscript, running to more than three-quarters of the projected novel, was written during his rest cure in Malta and Naples, beginning about Jan. 6, 1832. Even in its unfinished state it contains some 85,000 words. Scott predicted for the book an immediate sale of 2,800 copies, writing to J. G. Lockhart, his biographer, that he hoped through it to attain his object of "expiring as rich a man as I could desire in my own freehold." The copyright of this unpublished work goes with the manuscript.

"Civilized" versus Primitive

MEXICO: A STUDY OF TWO AMERICAS. By STUART CHASE, in collaboration with MARIAN TYLER. Illustrated by DIEGO RIVERA. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by ERNEST GRUENING

FOR some years Stuart Chase has been eyeing the American scene with a penetrating gaze and analyzing its foibles—economic foibles, especially—with shrewd objectiveness couched in graphic and highly entertaining metaphor. He has been the machine's traditional "best friend and severest critic."

A year and a half ago he returned from Mexico—his bags bulging with pottery and *serapes*, products of the native craftsmanship—to the metropolis of this "land of plenty" to find entry to his apartment blocked by a bread line. This ironic contrast between that poverty-stricken land where virtually no one was hungry or unemployed, and our own richest country on earth where surplus and starvation were clinched in a *danse macabre*, furnished a theme which, first developed in a magazine article, beckoned invitingly for expansion into book form. "Mexico, A Study in Two Americas" resulted.

Appearing some twenty-one months after the collapse of the Great Illusion, this study could scarcely be more timely or appropriate. It gives voice to the thoughts and feelings expressed, or dimly sensed, by a vast and increasing number of Americans. A book about Mexico, it is essentially a sermon for the inhabitants of these United States. In vivid colors it depicts the contrasting culture below the Rio Grande. There, with due allowance for certain exceptions, while material standards of living may be low, there is no destitution; no latest models of motor-car, electric refrigeration, or radio, but no fear of inability to keep up instalment payments; no "prosperity," but no unemployment; "wantlessness," yet contentment.

The bases for comparison are "Middletown," pen-name for Muncie, Indiana, whose *mores* the Lynds recorded, and a corresponding survey of a mountain town in Morelos, entitled "Tepoztlan, A Mexican Village," by Robert Redfield, University of Chicago anthropologist. Mr. Chase's contrasts, based la
on the material in these studies, are found in p
these excerpts:

> The gospel of Middletown is work, and the gospel of Tepoztlan is play—one day in three, the year around, the southern community is celebrating a major or minor fiesta. Yet, for all their hard work, a fraction of the men in Middletown is constantly unemployed and bowed down with fear and worry. Unemployment is unheard of in Tepoztlan. . . . Business depressions do not affect a handicraft culture. Cut off from the outside world, she would eat just as well as heretofore. . . . At a pinch she can feed herself.

Likewise the houses of Tepoztlan are built of local material, and each constructed by the man who will dwell therein. The clothing of its inhabitants never goes out of style. The community is virtually self-sufficient, self-contained, independent of national "hard times," unaffected by world crises.

By contrast in Middletown, "there is no trace of local or regional economic self-sufficiency; the community is locked beyond recall into the highly delicate and interdependent economy of two hemispheres." If rubber in the tropics fails, Middletown, without motor cars, would be lost. Ninety-nine per cent of its products are shipped out, and but one per cent is locally consumed. "If these far markets fail—as they do to-day—repercussion is quick and deadly. The men of Middletown are on the streets. Cash they must have or starve." As wages and cash decline, purchasing power sinks with them, local merchants cease to make profits, the vicious circle of unemployment widens, "for rent" signs appear, "a bank gurgles and expires, carrying the savings of a thousand households. . . . The future hangs like a great black raven over Middletown. In Tepoztlan the sky is clear."

So much for the economic contrast. What about individual happiness and self-sufficiency? In Tepoztlan, Mr. Chase insists, "nobody starves spiritually or physically." At labor he notes the natives'

> dexterous fingers, their timeless patience, their concentrated interest as they weave and cut and hammer something a little different than anyone else has made. They punch no time clocks, prepare no job tickets, visit no employment offices, receive no welfare work, say yessir to no boss. They work when they feel like it, stop when they feel like it, sleep when they feel like it.

Yet "in actual preparation for life, Tepoztlan's educational methods are superior to Middletown's."

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Finally, Mr. Chase deems the play of the primitive handicraft culture superior to our "over-commercialized, mechanized, standardized, sitting, watching, listening" second-hand participation, and considers that the Mexicans get more fun out of their recreation: "They take their fun as they take their food, part and parcel of their organic life. They are not driven to play by boredom."

And so Mr. Chase epitomizes the basic difference between the two cultures' objectives:

> Not cash, but goods, indeed frequently not goods but happiness and peace of mind, is the prevailing Mexican desire. This centres values in innately valuable things, rather than in the artificial, unreal things—rows of figures, ink marks on ledgers, pieces of engraved paper—which govern us in the North. We have first to grope our way through this heavy litter of symbols to find life itself—and increasingly we never find it.

Such is the essence of Mr. Chase's thesis. With its implications, this is one of the most vital and thought-provoking books of our time. It is elaborated with a variety of data concerning Mexican Indian life (for all this, let it be distinctly understood, applies not to the Mexican white, or even *mestizo*, but to the Amerind), enriched with vivid glimpses of the charm, color, variety, and picturesque uniqueness of the Mexican scene. Though Mr. Chase's predilections are apparent, he aims to maintain a scrupulous belance. Ulysses lashed to the mast was no more determined not to be lured by the siren plea to go native. Mr. Chase confesses to a bathtub complex. The Mexican formula, never to labor any harder than necessity demands, he admits, he is striving to make his own. He believes that Northern hygiene could be introduced *in toto* into Mexican society without damage and with marked benefit; that our scientific agriculture would help; he prescribes electricity (minus our own power trust rackets) to relieve needless drudgery. And he concludes with some useful advice: To the Mexican villagers—to stand pat and hold to the "something precious . . . which the western world has lost and flounders miserably trying to regain"; to the government and intellectuals of Mexico—to build a new nation around the Indian; to Middletown—to ponder on regional self-sufficiency and to learn the art of living.

The hope, herewith affirmed, that Mr. Chase's debit and credit ledger of the two contrasting, though contiguous cultures, be digested by every literate American, expresses this reviewer's sense of the importance of the basic philosophy Chase has for some time been developing which finds its completest fruition in this latest essay. Of the book itself, it is necessary to be somewhat more critical. For though Mr. Chase is admittedly a popularizer—a function that in view of the enormous increase in world population, and the difficulty of disseminating the cumulating store of knowledge, is perhaps even more important than the original extraction of authoritative material from its sources—he leans somewhat too heavily on data gathered by others, and some of his conclusions, leaped at with impulsive enthusiasm, are not always accurate.

Thus his statement that in Yucatan "famines are unknown" would be amply refuted by almost any history of the peninsula.

The assertion: "The position of women (in pre-Conquest Mexico) was far superior to that of Spain —then and now. It amounted virtually to equality, . . ." is certainly not in accord with Bandelier, our foremost authority on Aztec society, whom Chase cites elsewhere in the same sub-chapter on social institutions.

One other criticism is demanded. Mr. Chase has written a book for popular consumption and has therefore omitted the encumbrance of footnotes. Why not go the whole way—in either direction? The academic paraphernalia of references index, etc., if used at all, can only be justified if complete and accurate. They belong in a book intended to be authoritative. Mr. Chase makes occasional citations in the text from the authors upon whose works he has drawn heavily; he also expresses generous acknowledgment in the preface. Nevertheless his text is loaded with uncredited quotations and citations.

Finally, the book would be improved if shortened considerably by strict adherence to Mr. Chase's central theme of contrast between the two Americas. Some of the material, such as the chapter entitled "The Six Hundred," a rehash from Prescott and Bernal Diaz of the Cortez epic, is superfluous. Other chapters are similarly padded with data not related to the underlying theme. For Mr. Chase has embedded in these one hundred thousand words an essay of supreme pertinence and significance to our time. We dislike the word "message," but it fits. The message is, however, needlessly swaddled in irrelevant material. Insofar as Mr. Chase has sought to write a book on Mexico (unless it were a sketchy travel book), his time there was too short, his first-hand information necessarily insufficient, his experience on the ground inadequate. There is no cause for criticism here, for his function is quite other. His own contribution of a searching analysis, of a keen and original balancing of cultural values, of a diagnosis of much that ails these United States—*that* should be kept trained to athlete's trim, and not occluded by statistical, extraneous historical, or anecdotal tissue. A forty thousand word book would permit a clearer understanding than a hundred thousand.

These strictures are, however, minor. Mr. Chase's obvious purpose has been adequately fulfilled, and he has made a unique and invaluable contribution to current enlightenment. The salient conclusion is that Mexico has far more to give to the United States than we to Mexico.

Out of History by Fiction

ALEXANDER. By KLAUS MANN. Translated by MARION SAUNDERS. New York: Brewer, Warren & Puntam. 1930. $2.

CÆSAR. By MIRKO JELUSICH. Translated by BERNARD MIALL. New York: Richard R. Smith. 1930. $3.

NERO. By ARTHUR WEIGALL. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1930.

ALARIC, THE GOTH. By MARCEL BRION. Translated by FREDERICK H. MARTENS. New York: Robert M. McBride. 1930. $3.50.

Reviewed by ALFRED R. BELLINGER
Yale University

THE popularity of biographies combining fact and invention is a conspicuous feature of current literature and raises an interesting point of criticism. How is one to judge them? Is the purpose to convey the truth about the subject in a larger fashion than is possible by adherence to mere fact, or is the subject to be regarded only as furnishing a convenient body of ready-made fact for the creation of a story? Sometimes the authors themselves incline to the former view. Their line of reasoning seems to be that the known facts never give a perfect picture of the man (which everyone admits) and that the fictitious completing of the picture results in a truer likeness (which is a matter of opinion). The critical reader is likely to be restive under such an assumption of authority, though the more docile may welcome an initiative which does all the work for him. But surely the authors are on safer ground when they claim the right to use anything they choose in the creation of a work of art. There are evident advantages to the appropriation of a real man as hero. For one thing, he may then have an œcumenical importance difficult if not impossible for a fictitious hero. Trollope succeeded in making a very convincing Prime Minister of England, but the glamor of royalty must depend on fact or on less sober fancy. Yet the hero of flesh and blood has his limitations incident to the very career which gives him his eminence. The consciousness of author and reader both is likely to be haunted by the facts, whose impertinence can only be countered by fiction that shall be entirely satisfying. There is infinite variety in the proportions in which the two elements may be combined, as the four books here discussed suggest, but, in the end, such a biography stands or falls by its quality as a piece of creative literature, not as a contribution to history.

* * *

The career of Alexander the Great has always been an invitation to writers of romance. Indeed, the practice of embroidering his achievements flourished so gaily even in his own lifetime that we shall probably never be able to disentangle fact and legend. Any modern, therefore, has sufficient precedent for taking Alexander as his hero and doing with him as he chooses. But it is not altogether apparent what Mann has chosen to do. It is certainly not Alexander the warrior nor Alexander the statesman of whom he writes: the conqueror's purely mundane greatness seems to be quite incidental. It is rather an analysis of Alexander's soul that is attempted, but what a curious conception! We have a self-conscious, neurotic boy, alternating between sentimental loneliness and childish braggadocio. First the psychic influence of his mother Olympias and then the various enchantments of the East keep him in a state of mystic bewilderment from which he emerges only at the end to realize that he has failed. His failure is in his relations with his friends, and this is a point of view which the author is at perfect liberty to adopt if he can make it good. But the reader will hardly feel that the subtlety of Alexander's friends, as here depicted, is sufficient compensation for their want of solid substance. It is a poor exchange for the blunt, courageous Black Clitus of history, who saved his life in battle and whom he slew in a drunken brawl, to have the calm, supercilious Clitus of fiction, who tells fairy stories (about Gilgamesh!) and regards with studied indifference the young king who loves him and fears him even more. The question of Alexander's reaction to his tutor Aristotle is surely material for great fiction, but here Aristotle is only a pedant, and Alexander is so athirst for all knowledge that he has no use for what can be taught him.

It is probably slighting the inner significance of the book to contrast its highly artificial characters with the virile realities, but that is a contrast which the author has made inevitable by his choice of theme. The last episode, in which the dying king is visited by a mysterious angel who confesses and absolves him is even more surprising than Faust going to heaven, and when the angel, who is very full of smiles and tears, says "You will return in another form," the instinctive comment is "What for?" The subtitle, "A Novel of Utopia," warns us that we must not be too literal in our appraisal, but, if we are to have a symbolic Alexander in place of the real one, we have a right to demand that the symbol should give at least some of the impression of greatness which the original does.

Mirko Jelusich's "Cæsar" certainly does not fail in any sense of reality although it uses invention with perfect freedom. The speed of that brilliant career is most convincingly portrayed. Such a passage as the description of the Gallic uprising that overwhelmed Sabinus and Cotta shows a fine power of military narrative. The arrangement in episodes enables the author to keep up the tempo without the retarding necessary for perfectly full connectives. Yet there is no lack of continuity, and few events are omitted. Of necessity there is little in the way of analysis. This is a story, not a critique. Cæsar as a legislator, as a political theorist, as a supreme master of prose, does not appear. The book is devoted to Cæsar as a man of action.

It must be admitted that action and not character is the author's forte. When the tenth legion is charging up the hill he is entirely at home; when Calpurnia or Pompey appears on the scene his performance is much less satisfactory. This is true whether the material be fact or fiction. The incidents of battle which the writer has invented are quite as valid as those for which he can rely on Cæsar's own Commentaries. But the other people who surround the hero are not well done. Partly this may be due to a mistaken feeling that the hero will be greater if all the other characters are scaled down. So Cicero is made a very petty politician; Labienus is a surly dog from the first, Curio, Pollio, Mark Antony are mere puppets. But partly it is real inability to make persons stand out. For example, the legend is

(*Continued on next page*)

A Balanced Ration for Week-End Reading

MEXICO. By STUART CHASE. *Macmillan.*
A study of Mexican history and culture.

THE GREAT PHYSICIAN. By EDITH GITTINGS REID. *Oxford University Press.*
An intimate biography of Sir William Osler.

SHADOWS IN THE ROCK. By WILLA CATHER. *Knopf.*
A tale of Quebec in the time of Frontenac.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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adopted that Brutus was Cæsar's son. Yet there is no use made of it. Father and son scarcely meet; Brutus is entirely colorless; Servilia, his mother, has not told him of his paternity and is herself no more significant a figure than any other woman in the drama. It is hard to see why the fiction should have been introduced.

The habit of presenting Cæsar as always right and everyone else as either wrong or superfluous is the technique of romance rather than of biography, and detracts from the interest which the real Cæsar arouses. Cicero's letters have given us a picture of the times of unusual completeness and detail, and we know that Cæsar was not the single giant moving about a stage peopled with puppets, but one among a number of powerful figures. His ability to dominate the others is a much higher evidence of his genius than the picture of him mastering a world where there is no competition to his greatness. This criticism is as telling on artistic grounds as on historical; it impairs the value of the book as a novel. Its strength is in its vividness, but it makes Cæsar a doer of great deeds rather than a great character.

It would certainly be unjust to class Weigall's "Nero" as a work of fiction. The author has consulted the sources with care and given the data with a laudable completeness. He evidently intends a serious defense of Nero against the excess of defamation to which he has been exposed, and it is only fair to consider that side of his work first, as most important. It is perfectly true that the aristocratic prejudice of Tacitus and Suetonius and the still more violent prejudice of the early Christians call for some modification, and much material for such modification will be found in these pages. But Mr. Weigall's determination to right the wrongs of the vilified emperor leads him to a use of the evidence which is not very sound critically. For example, in the attempt to show that Nero was not only better than he is painted but also better than others who wore the purple, Suetonius's scandalous gossip about Tiberius is taken at face value whereas every accusation of Nero is tested with anxious care and the evidence of the same Suetonius that Nero poisoned his step-brother Britannicus is rejected, though it is supported by that of Tacitus, Cassius Dio, and Josephus, and contradicted by no ancient authority. We are told that "there is not a single instance known to history of his condemnation of any man without justification." What, then, of Poetus Thrasea? His offense was dislike of the emperor and an unmannerly frankness in showing it. This is interpreting "justification" liberally. When all the explaining away is done, Nero remains a most unsatisfactory character.

* * *

But the author cannot content himself with explaining away. Nero must be the hero of the piece, and, to that end, is presented as a great artist subject to all the difficulties of genius confronted with philistine conservatism and therefore not to be judged by ordinary standards. The conservatives are headed first by his mother Agrippina and later by the Roman aristocrats, and Nero's relations with them are discussed in an analysis of his psychology and theirs which I think may not unfairly be considered fiction. There is something very unsatisfactory about the picture of Agrippina, the details of whose career are not withheld, convincing everybody, including herself, that she was the soul of the party of ancient Republican puritanism. Still more doubtful is the complicated structure leading to the extraordinary conclusion that the emperor's attempt to drown his mother was a magnanimous act of mercy! But, setting aside such extreme developments of the temperament *motif*, the two vital questions are: did Nero believe that he was a great artist? and, was he? It is perfectly clear that Nero rated himself very highly as a performer and counted the applause of an audience his greatest joy, but that he or anybody else of his time had so high a conception of the dignity of art as seriously to hold that an emperor was justified in the utter neglect of the business of government for the sake of it is more than can be proved. His enthusiasm for his own virtuosity is a very different thing from his worship of art. The case would be stronger if he could be shown to have distinguished between Nero the singer and Nero the charioteer, or if anyone of that period had pronounced for the arts as superior to other human activities. Weigall insists that the Greeks recognized them to be so, yet the Greek Plutarch, Nero's younger contemporary, says flatly that, though the works of Phidias and Polyclytus are admirable, no gentleman would want to be a sculptor. Of course, the fact that Nero drew great crowds is no evidence. If the king of England gave violin concerts would he not play to crowded houses, no matter what was thought of the seemliness of the performance?

Nor will it suffice for Weigall to prove that Nero thought he was a great artist if he was not one. Obviously, in that case, he was not heroic but absurd. So we are asked to believe that he was indeed a genius. His talent for painting and sculpture is not stressed; that is merely thrown in for good measure. His ability as a poet is rather stated than demonstrated. Indeed, seeing that only ten lines are preserved, it could not be demonstrated, and the ancient testimony is certainly not impressive. Suetonius said he had a turn for poetry and liked to write verse and did it well. This is the most enthusiastic comment we have. It is optimistic of Weigall to write: "There is much reason to suppose that Nero was a poet of merit if not an actual genius in this respect." On Nero as a singer, however, he chiefly relies, and will have us accept him as the Caruso of antiquity. The basis for such a reputation is this: he won a great many prizes; Suetonius and Tacitus say that audiences received him with enthusiasm; and Tacitus reports that he had a very loud voice, which Suetonius denies. It is not much to go on. Weigall does what he can with it, but when one has read the best he has to say the stubborn conviction persists that the red-haired emperor with his stage fright and his trained band of applauders, his passion for winning competitions, and his interminable performances, was making a fool of himself. No, with the help of a little prejudice, a perfectly acceptable villain may be made of Nero, but he is not the stuff of which heroes are made. If the reader wants to know all the truth about him he must dig out the sources for himself (which will not be worth his while); if he wants great literature about him, he can do no better than read Tacitus (which will).

ILLUSTRATION, BY DIEGO RIVERA,
for Stuart Chase's "Mexico."
See page 35.

In all three of the works discussed there is an abundance of reliable information on which the biographer may draw. This is not true af Alaric, though the fifth century A. D. is so much nearer to us. Our knowledge of him is so slight and unsatisfactory that if he is to be presented with any detail as a living person it must be by the use of liberal invention. Brion's attempt is not a happy one. His fiction is feeble, his history questionable. He shows no understanding of military matters, and, considering that Alaric's whole career was that of a warrior, this is a serious defect. For instance, when Alaric was ravaging Greece, Stilicho, the great general of the Roman empire, was sent to drive him out. Twice the imperial forces appeared to have him at their mercy; both times they let him go. Nobody knows why. Bury's conjecture was that Stilicho had come to some sort of agreement with his fellow barbarian and sacrificed the empire's interests to his racial bias. But Brion depicts Stilicho as twice undertaking to starve Alaric out rather than assault him and each time taking so long about it that his detractors could persuade the emperor to change his mind and order cessation of hostilities. Neither party emerges with credit by this explanation. Stilicho may have been corruptible but he was not a fool. Alaric's reputation certainly does not profit by the affair. In fact, if this account were correct, he would have been a very stupid commander to get himself twice into the same hopeless position.

There are lively passages in the book: the chapter on "Relapse into Barbarism" is fair. But though we are told that Alaric was a great man, there is nothing to show it. *Was* he great? He certainly did a deal of damage and he sacked Rome, but history credits him with no remarkable gifts and fiction has supplied none.

There are two special features of the work that deserve comment. The map inside the covers showing Europe in 485 is excellent: a convenience to the reader which might well be copied in many other volumes. On the other hand, the Bibliography is nonsense. Lists of books with no indication of their contents or value are a nuisance even in works of professional scholarship: in such a one as this, which is designed for the general reader if for anyone, they are simply a display of vanity.

The scarcity of great historical novels is notorious. It is not likely that hybrid biographies will produce a higher proportion of lasting successes. The fact is that, unless the fiction be of the first class, the truth is a good deal more interesting. It requires judgment on the part of the author, and judgment is more laborious than imagination, but it is rewarded by permanence. After the current fashion has subsided real biographies will continue to be written and read as long as reading and writing last.

Pegasus Perplexing

NUMBER XV

My First

Locally rooted, I'm often reputed
Egotist sluggishly selfish.
Socially active, I'm often attractive
(As when I happen to smell-fish).

My Second

Modest intestine, I'm rarely expressed in
Verse: to discuss me is rude-in-us.
Just put an *s* with me, and you express with me
(Vulgarly) pep fortitudinous.

My Whole

"Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle,"
With characteristics respective,
Would seem far apart; but, in musical art,
I become their effective connective.

NUMBER XVI

How paradoxical the story
Of rank reputed glorious!
My first may be a merry tory
Yet not be meritorious.
Exposed to every kind of knavery,
He leads a life of gilded slavery.

My next exists as termination,
And rarely independently;
Yet with my first's coöperation
It shines with him resplendently.
In state of royal aristocracy
(Often derided by hypocrisy).

RULES

Throughout the summer months *The Saturday Review* will publish two charades in each issue of the magazine, the last charade to appear in the issue of August twenty-ninth.

It is our hope that readers of the paper will be interested in solving these puzzles and will submit answers at the conclusion of the contest. Prizes will consist of copies of the book from which the charades are taken, "Pegasus Perplexing," by Le Baron Russell Briggs, to be published by The Viking Press at the conclusion of the contest.

Contestants must solve correctly at least ten of the twenty-four charades in order to qualify. A prize will be awarded for each of the 100 highest scores obtained by those who qualify.

The highest score will win a copy of the book specially bound in leather.

In case of ties each tying competitor will receive the award.

Solve the charades each week as they appear, but do not send in your answers until the last charade is published on August twenty-ninth.

In submitting answers merely number them to correspond with the number of the charade to which they apply and mail the list to Contest Editor, *The Saturday Review*, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

All answers must be mailed not later than midnight of September tenth, 1931.

It is not required that competitors subscribe to the *Saturday Review*; copies of the magazine are available for free examination at public libraries or at the office of publication. The contest is open to everyone except employees of the *Saturday Review* and The Viking Press.

The accuracy of the answers will be verified by the editors of the *Saturday Review*.

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The Bowling Green

Star-Dust from Mrs. Thrale

IN January 1931 there arrived at the John Rylands Library, in Manchester, two large cases packed with papers which will cause a lively blood-pressure in the veins of Johnsonians. Most librarians would have hastened to give the news to the press. Not so Dr. Henry Guppy, under whose care the John Rylands has become in one generation one of the world's greatest treasuries. Discoveries that would excite the New York *Times* into a front-page dispatch he takes in his even stride. Quietly, and with due deliberation, the packing cases were emptied and their contents studied. In the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* for July 1931, the story is told by Dr. Moses Tyson, keeper of Western MSS on the Rylands staff. From Dr. Tyson's cull of the treasure, brought to us by one of our London couriers, we lift a few memoranda. The Rylands Bulletin says serenely, "It is not yet possible to form anything approaching a correct estimate of the importance of this collection, but by the end of the year it will be reduced to order and made accessible by means of a detailed catalogue, with a full index, which is in course of preparation."

* * *

The two packing cases contained the unpublished papers of our famous friend Mrs. Piozzi, Dr. Johnson's Mrs. Thrale. There are over 3,000 letters and other manuscript records of the Thrale-Piozzi family, including—to mention only the star-dust—20 *unpublished* letters of the Doctor's to Mrs. Thrale and her own 147 page notebook of the famous tour in France when Dr. Johnson accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Thrale and Queeney (their oldest daughter) on his only visit to the Continent. There are over a hundred unpublished letters written by Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson. There are letters to and from such people as Boswell, Burke, the Burneys, Garrick, Goldsmith, Mrs. Siddons, the Ladies of Llangollen. There are the manuscripts of most of the published and unpublished works of Mrs. Thrale herself. It will be possible, when all these materials are collated, to know English literature's most famous bluestocking more intimately than we ever did before, and to understand better the always fascinating question of the Doctor's friendship with the Thrale household. Those who may have underestimated Hester Thrale will be startled to find among her literary remains her translations from French, Spanish, Italian, and Hebrew; journals, fairy tales, comedies, essays on theology, notes on Hebrew syntax, the MS of her two-volume work on British Synonymy. Certainly not least in sentimental interest are the certificate of her marriage to Piozzi, dated July 23, 1784, and what is probably the last letter that passed between her and Dr. Johnson, dated July 15, 1784. The Rylands Bulletin says that the signature of this letter "has been very vigorously crossed out later." By Dr. Johnson himself, we wonder? Certainly, remembering his feelings about that marriage, one imagines the poor old man may have done so in a fit of bitterness.

Dr. Tyson tells us that Mrs. Thrale-Piozzi's papers were "sealed up at Bath" by her executors after her death in 1821. They passed to her husband's nephew, Sir John Piozzi Salusbury. At his death in 1858 they descended to the Rev. G. A. Salusbury, who supplied Abraham Hayward (also author of that genial work *The Art of Dining*) with data for his *Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi* (1861). The next heir was Major E. P. Salusbury, who died in 1908, during whose lifetime these papers began to disperse. There were sales at Sotheby's in 1904, 1907, and 1908. One very important item, a MS diary and notebook known as *Thraliana*, after moving to and fro, finally reached a secure home in the Huntington Library as recently as 1922. Mr. A. M. Broadley, who gathered together much of this centrifugal material for his *Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale* (1910), feared that that 1908 sale had marked the final and irrevocable scattering of Mrs. Thrale's carefully guarded relics. But apparently a mass remained still unexamined; a mass greater both in bulk and importance than has ever been made public hitherto. The curators of the Rylands Library are too wise to tell us exactly how they made this noble discovery. Learned Johnsonians will comment the matter better than I, and with pulses evenly divided between joy and envy. Here we can only prickle their scalps a little by lifting a few quotations from Dr. Tyson's memorandum.

* * *

The material of course is very diverse, and radiates interest in many directions. There is the manuscript of Mrs. Piozzi's will (1816). There are early proofsheets of Dr. Johnson's preface to his edition of Shakespeare, with his own corrections. There are many letters referring to Arthur Young, the agriculturist—to whom, as Mitchell Kennerley reminds me, George Washington wrote so often for advice. There are twenty-four letters from Mrs. Piozzi to Byron's grandmother. There are an incredible number of letters and papers referring to the business problems of the Thrale family and the love affairs of Mrs. Thrale's daughters, including the elopement of Cecilia. Among all her complicated concerns it is amazing to consider how Mrs. Thrale found time to do so much severe speculation. Did she, like Voltaire's Mme du Châtelet, reserve certain hours of the day for uninterrupted seclusion in her study? Here is a manuscript of 504 leaves, her *Retrospection: or a Review of the most striking and important events, characters, situations, and their consequences, which the last* 1800 *years have presented to Mankind* (1801). Here is her manuscript of twenty-three leaves, *Three Warnings to John Bull before he dies. By an old acquaintance of the Public.*

Obviously the most general interest will be in the fresh information about Dr. Johnson. Many of the papers, Dr. Tyson tells us, are annotated in the Doctor's hand, showing how continually his help and counsel were sought. After business worries in 1772 had seriously affected Mr. Thrale's health and temper, Mrs. Thrale turned more and more often to Johnson for advice in matters of tact. She writes to the Doctor:

> Do huff my Master and comfort him by Turns according to your own Dear Discretion; he has consulted you now, and given you a Right to talk with him about his ill-Tim'd Melancholy, and do keep your Influence over him for all our sakes.

A pretty picture of Dr. Johnson's honored status in the brewer's household in 1775:

> When will you come home? I shall be wondrous glad to see you, though I write everything so I shall have nothing to tell; but I shall have you safe in your Bow window to run to, when anything comes in my head, and you say that's what you are kept for, you know.

In November 1777 Mrs. Thrale writes:

> My Master stands over me and bids me say that if you are pretty *fresh* and *well*, and have a Mind to save his Credit, and take a frolick, you might come hither on Fryday the fourteenth of this Month, dine with us on the Saturday, with Beauclerk on Sunday, Hamilton on Monday, and return with us to Streatham on the Tuesday the eighteenth, which is the Day we have fixed upon to leave this Place. Mr Thrale says you will not understand what is meant by *saving his Credit*, but it is because he had promised those two Gentlemen the Pleasure of seeing you this Season.
>
> Mr Thrale is *fresh and well himself*, I am sure, he hunts and eats and sleeps very comfortably, and has got the *vive hodie* pretty strongly impressed upon him. We spend our Money merrily I know, I fret sometimes about it, but I never grumble, and desire you make no Answer to this part of my Letter.

* * *

The French tour in the autumn of 1775 is well remembered by students of Boswell. Bozzy lamented that the Doctor, by reason of "a precipitate burning of his papers a few days before his death," had destroyed most of his memoranda of the trip, but the notes that remained gave us some vivid flashes. We saw the stout old man persisting in wearing his London clothes; surprising the Parisians by speaking Latin as he was self-conscious about his French; taking the liberty of looking at the books in a fashionable lady's closet and very contemptuous about them; displeased by a Paris footman's putting sugar in the coffee with his fingers; running a race with Baretti in the rain, and beating him. Now by the priceless discovery of Mrs. Thrale's own full record, the picture will be complete. The journal is to be published in full by the Rylands Library. Dr. Guppy will not mind our quoting just a fragment or so from his Bulletin.

Evidently the tour began in high spirits. When they had only been in France a few days she noted, "from the Mouton d'Or at Neuf Chatel,"

> Mr Johnson has made a little Distich at every Place we have slept at, for example,
>
> A Calais,
> Trop de frais.
>
> St Omer,
> Tour est cher.
>
> Arras,
> Helas!
>
> A Amiens,
> On n'a rien.
>
> Au Mouton,
> Rien de Bon.

Apparently there was a narrow escape from a dangerous carriage accident. The party travelled in two coaches, and the one containing Mr. Thrale, Baretti, and Queeney, broke the traces on a steep hill and the horses ran away. Mr. Thrale, attempting to check them, was thrown out and hurt. But the Doctor, perhaps because he was in the other vehicle, was undisturbed. Mrs. Thrale writes:

> Dr Johnson's perfect unconcern for the Lives of three People, who would all have felt for his, shocked and amaz'd me . . . but that, as Baretti says, is true Philosophy.

And, to conclude our borrowings from Dr. Tyson's delightful summary, here is Mrs. Thrale's picture of the Doctor in a characteristic stubbornness:

> This morning Mr Johnson had a mind to dispute with me concerning the High Mass we saw celebrating at Douay and whether we might not have staid through the whole Ceremony and seen the Elevation of the Host. If you had staid, says Baretti, you must have kneel'd. I have no scruples, said I, I was willing enough to kneel. Johnson said he would not have knelt on such an occasion for the whole city of Douay.

Perhaps, in extracting these plums from the richest pastry of the eighteenth century I am only mentioning something that expert Johnsonians already knew. It is hard to believe that the Manchester *Guardian* may not already have Told the World. At any rate, we all have one more reason for homage to the great John Rylands Library.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Prelude

BUT there were houses in the intermediate
Voyage from dark to dark, resting-places
Known to this homeless child that is the spirit,
Something remembered, something dearly loved,
The well-known door, the doorstep, the small
window,
The face behind the window, the clock clacking
Comfortable time, time for sleep,
Time for the coming of the beloved's footstep,
Time for the firelight on the wall,
For the simple voice that says—

Here I am,
Here is a letter from the other world,
Here is news from the land of everlasting,
Here is the yellow nasturtium picked in the garden,
with purple
Bloodstains in its throat, the marks where the bee
Plunged in the pollen, remember these, take them
With you when you set out again, this flower
Will be your passport—

And so this little room
With four walls and a ceiling and a floor,
A picturebook in which myself am picture,
The clock that strikes at a minute past the hour,
Moth in the carpet, corruption in the doorpost,
The visitor who comes and sits too long,
Angels who come too seldom, the little box
Worn down with affectionate use, and the air
So always, so particularly, in this place,
My own, my spirit's—

Come, it is time to move,
There are so many places we must see,
So many other houses we must visit,
Doorsteps and windows, so many faces too
Behind those windows, other clocks with other
Errors in time, other carpets, other chairs,
And we must hurry, or we will miss the ship
With clearance papers for the Milky Way—

Deluded sentimentalist, will you stay
In this one room forever, and hold only
One withered flower in your withered hand? . . .
This is the ship that goes to No Man's Land.

CONRAD AIKEN.

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BOOKS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

No Joke

POEMS A JOKING WORD. By LAURA RIDING. London: Jonathan Cape. 1931.
EXPERTS ARE PUZZLED. By LAURA RIDING. The same.
THOUGH GENTLY. By LAURA RIDING. Deya, Majorca: The Seizin Press. 1931.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

LAURA RIDING'S three latest volumes exhibit a strange sort of lawlessness, a lawlessness toward discipline. What seems a rebellion against traditional patterns turns into a pattern more formal and self-constricting than the loose romanticism this author has excoriated. "Experts Are Puzzled" contains two sets of prose pieces which are critical, tangential, and indistinctly autobiographical. "*Poems* A Joking Word" is a collection made up of two earlier volumes of poetry as well as certain more recent poems. "Though Gently" is an assemblage of small essays, aphorisms, "thoughts," and more poems. Some of the contents are difficult to classify. "Fancy," for example, which reads:

10 is the finite of 5.
5 is the infinite of 1.
1 is the repose of 2.
2 is the will of 9.
9 is the question of 3.
3 is the guess of 4.
4 is the patience of 7.
7 is the boldness of 8.
8 is the anxiety of 6.
6 is the foolishness of numbers.

It is easy enough to say that this is a set of strained conceits, or arbitrary fancies, or the reduction (to absurdity) of figures to figures of speech. It is easier still to ridicule this work—almost as easy to rouse Miss Riding to controversy. Miss Riding makes no attempt to please or even placate "the average reader," yet only a predetermined antagonist would accuse her of attempting merely to shock the literary bourgeoisie.

Even the explanatory jacket of "Experts Are Puzzled" may well lead the same average reader—Whitman's democratically divine average—to add "And Why Not?" "Experts Are Puzzled" is a conclusion concerning the fundamental limitations of human intelligence, "and this is a book about intelligence. . . . Indeed, the purpose of the book, in so far as so moderate a book may be said to have a purpose, is to see how far an unpuzzled intelligence may go without disrespect to experts, and how far it can keep within the agreed limitations without violence to its obsessions." But, among other things that are not clear, it is not clear what the "agreed limitations" are. And this is a pity, for the manner of "Experts Are Puzzled" will repulse many a reader whose limitations are broader than Miss Riding's obsessions. This, as I said, is a pity. In the most communicative of her three volumes there is a combination of teasing malice and witty experimentation that continually breaks through the surface obscurities. "Miss Banquett, or the Populating of Cosmania" is an ironic fairy-tale, a keen, if recondite commentary on a beauty which is too often its own excuse for being. "Arista Manuscript" and "An Address to America" are less restrained satires. "Obsession," possibly the most important segment, is a self-driving piece of self-analysis. The style throughout is repetitively, painstaking epigrammatic. Sometimes the epigrams are as surprising as an unexpected blow; sometimes they are no more than reworked platitudes, like "Results are the work of the workshop turning into works or happenings because someone walks into the workshop and Sees."

The preface to "A Joking Word" repeats the word poem (or poems) ninety times and the word doom (or dooms) one hundred and thirty times. Such a passage as the following is both symptomatic and significant:

> Poems means jokingly the surprisingness of doom. Poems is a joking word to say that doom is surprising enough for there to be poems instead of poem. But poem is not doom. Poem are doom and poems is doom. Poem is a grave word to say that doom is not at all surprising, though poems means jokingly the surprisingness of doom. Poem is as grave a word as the word doom and poems is as joking a word as the word doom. Poems is also as joking a word as the word dooms, but dooms is not as grave a word or as joking a word as the word doom. But I don't want to dwell on the word dooms, except to define what it is I don't want to dwell on. Besides dooms and poems there is also of course prose. But I don't want to dwell on prose. Prose is what happens when you don't dwell, so I couldn't dwell on prose unless I wasn't dwelling.

It is, as I said, easy enough to poke fun at such a paragraph. It is almost impossible not to be aware of the infantile echolalia, the laborious word-jamming—half pedantic, half punning—the purposeful distortions and grammatical dislocations, a *réchauffé* of overdone Gertrude Stein. But that is not all there is here. In spite of its uncompromising and inflexible manner, in spite of the fact that it is torn from its prefatory context, something comes through, something that should interest anyone interested in expression. It is not an explanation, it is not a credo, although it might be taken for one; it is—or it seems to me to be—the struggle of an artist with herself and her words.

One of the most arresting manœuvres of the literary left-wing has been toward a revitalization or revaluation of the accepted vocabulary. (See the files of *transition* and Jolas's "Revolution of the Word"). James Joyce and Gertrude Stein represent the two extremes. Joyce finds 500,000 English words insufficient to register his subconscious nocturnal musings "out of space, out of time"; Miss Stein finds creation cluttered with an irritating excess of language. Miss Riding is on the side of the Great Simplifier; she might be writing in C. K. Ogden's Basic English which is limited to 850 words. Such limitation puts the user to the severest test. Restricted to a vocabulary whose ideal is the word in continual action, she must make flexibility out of what is fixed; she must, somehow, make every word as free, as virgin, as though it had never yet been coupled with any other word.

This is the poet's task—a task for which Miss Riding, in spite of her intelligence, has unfortunately the wrong equipment. She has a power of analysis, a stiff but definite style, a not-too-loving wit. She can be amusing in "The Quids"; dramatic in "John and I"; half-revealing, half-resentful of revelation in the fragmentary "The Lady of the Apple," "Goat and Amalthea," and one or two others. But, while we respect her refusal to employ the over-exploited "poetic" attitude to poetry, while we do not dispute her far from winning choice of idiom, we ask something more. Listening, we wait for the word that has been waiting to be made new, for the phrase which is undefinable but unmistakable, for the syllable that is fresh and, because of that freshness, final. It does not come.

Fokker's Autobiography

FLYING DUTCHMAN: THE LIFE OF FOKKER. By ANTHONY H. G. FOKKER and BRUCE GOULD. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by F. J. H. O'RORKE

A PERUSAL of Fokker's "Autobiography" (apparently liberally Americanized by Bruce Gould) leaves at least one very definite impression—that the "Flying Dutchman," no matter how great a pioneer of aviation he may be, lacks most of the attributes of what is known as a sportsman.

He boasts first of evading military service in Holland by the simulation of "flat feet," devotes a large amount of space to describing the smuggling out of Germany of planes and engines by means of wholesale bribery, presumably for personal gain, though constantly reiterating that money meant nothing to him (his remarks on page 229 hardly jibe with this, however), and towards the end does what he can to belittle Admiral Byrd. His story does show courage and brains in plenty, but compared with such books of wartime flying as the late Air-Commodore Samson's "Fights and Flights," Maurice Baring's "R. F. C. H. Q. 1914-18," and the late J. B. McCudden's "Five Years in the Royal Flying Corps," it is dull reading, indeed. Unfortunately none of these books has as yet been published in this country, and it surely seems high time that our intelligent reading public should get a chance to read and study the achievements of some British and French flyers as compared with this book and Floyd Gibbons's "The Red Air Fighter." "Sweet are the uses of advertisement," and Richthofen and Fokker are all very well in their way, but a little judicious "boosting" of the three books mentioned above when published here, and the publication of lives of such giants as Barker, Mannock, Garros, Guynemer, and Nungesser would open the eyes of a good many readers. One of the very best books of wartime flying experiences, "Letters of a Flying Officer," by Rothesay Stuart-Wortley, is almost unknown because published without "blurbs."

Fokker's chief claim to fame is based on two achievements—the development of the original "Fokker" fighting plane and the "invention" of the synchronized gear to fire through the propellor. As a matter of fact, there is no clear title to either one of these as more than one authority states that the original "Fokker" was an adaptation of the French "Morane" monoplane (see Major C. C. Turner's "The Struggle in the Air 1914-18," London, Edward Arnold, 1919, page 42, and Baring's book, page 114. It was in a "Morane" monoplane, by the way, that Lt. Warneford, V.C., R.N.A.S., shot down the first Zeppelin in June, 1915). As for the synchronized gear—this invention is generally credited to Constantinesco who first developed the oil pulsation theory, to be used so successfully in the "C. C. Gear" of the R. F. C.

A book such as this should have an index.

Some Events of the War

COLOSSAL BLUNDERS OF THE WAR. By WILLIAM SEAVER WOODS. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT G. ALBION
Princeton University

MR. WOODS has unfortunately not fitted his very readable book to his striking title. Most of the blunders he describes were not colossal and many of the failures were not properly blunders. Inspired by the terrific slaughter at Verdun, the editor of the *Literary Digest* wanted to analyze the stupidity which so often caused needless loss of life. His lack of critical discrimination robs the book of value as a contribution to military science. With the title changed to "Things that Went Wrong" or "The Drives that Failed," however, he would have avoided misrepresentation and still have given the general reader a series of vivid pictures.

The analysis of past failures is one of the most valuable functions of military history. It may take a genius to adapt a successful example to his own needs, but nearly all can profit by studying past errors. These fall into two classes. On the one hand are the real blunders, almost predestined to failure. On the other hand are the reasoned risks which miss success by a narrow margin and might, with a few changes, warrant repetition. Mr. Woods has made his own colossal blunder in failing to distinguish adequately between these two categories.

His criterion is absolute success or failure, without taking extenuating circumstances into account. "In war," he writes, "a miscalculation is a crime. 'You failed!' cried Robert E. Lee when one of his officers began to make excuses for a reverse, and in war that is the only reply." Yet military history has been far more liberal with Lee himself and with Hannibal, too, for that matter.

"German blunders lost the war. . . . It was not one big blunder, or two, or three, but it was blunder on blunder and error on error," declares Mr. Woods. In his *ex post facto* wisdom, he condemns as a whole the drives of 1914 and 1918, as well as unrestricted submarine warfare, "Germany's supreme blunder." Yet those three great efforts all came dangerously close to success, as the Allies have borne witness. Any one of the three, slightly modified, might be repeated again with reasonable chance of success.

Instead of condemning them as a whole, Mr. Woods might have come nearer to achieving his laudable purpose by analyzing more critically the actual causes for failure. He calls the 1914 drive a blunder because it brought England into the war, yet the fundamental error was apparently not the invasion of Belgium but the weakening of the German right wing entrusted with that task. The submarine campaign is criticized principally because it brought in the United States, but that, too, must have seemed a well-reasoned risk. The submarine offered a fair chance of victory at a trifling cost to Germany compared with the expense in men and material of a single conventional Western Front drive. The chief error seems to have been the failure to build more submarines. The Peace Drive of 1918 also seemed the logical step for Germany in view of her temporary preponderance of force on the Western Front and the growing discontent behind her lines. An adequate explanation of the failure to exploit the temporary "break through" and to capture Amiens would have been of real value. Mr. Woods includes all those answers but their effect is lost in his sweeping condemnation.

Verdun, on the other hand, *was* a colossal German blunder. Once the initial bombardment had failed, the attack should have stopped. The hundreds of thousands of German infantry who were subsequently thrown into that inferno were literally sacrificed to stupidity, whereas those who fell before Amiens might well have been paving the way for victory. Numerous as are the blunders which the author enumerates, he still has overlooked one important shortcoming of the Germans. He criticizes the British delay in using tanks, but does not bring out clearly that the Germans wasted the surprise effect of poison gas on a minor offensive in 1915. Had they saved it for Verdun, it might have meant victory.

The Allied blunders cited by Mr. Woods seem to have deserved superlatives fully as strong as those he bestows upon the Germans. The unimaginative British strategy and tactics on the Western Front sacrificed the flower of that nation's manhood without half the prospect of success offered by the great German drives at the beginning and at the end of the war. The bloody repulse of the French under Nivelle at the Aisne is in the same category. The fact that the Gallipoli campaign so nearly succeeded in spite of glaring mismanagement only adds to the tragedy of the heroic sacrifices there.

In the quarter of the book devoted to Russia, the author has been carried away by interest in the Rasputin affair and has given a disproportionate amount of space to what went on behind the scenes. To be consistent, he should have restricted himself more to the military results of Rasputin's influence, or should have also estimated the political situation in the other countries.

The part on "America's Costly Lessons in the War" has been given undue emphasis. It scarcely seems to have deserved its place at the beginning of the book. Aside from the "colossal" question of unpreparedness which has dogged the American army in all its wars, the blunders which he cites were of a rather minor nature. Mr. Woods points out the failure of Congress to maintain the original provisions of the National Defense Act, but his arguments for preparedness are seriously weakened by the subsequent contention that the most highly prepared army in the world committed the worst blunders in the war!

In spite of all these shortcomings, the book is decidedly interesting. The style is lucid and the author has drawn many graphic word pictures. He has also gathered a large amount of excellent anecdotal material. The fact that the blunder was not colossal does not spoil the story of the green American divisional staff which received a crate of trained carrier pigeons from the British and replied courteously that the birds were delicious. The book leaves as its strongest impression the constant courage and obedience of the rank and file who carried out even the stupidest orders without flinching. It is a pity that the fundamental groundwork of the book is not of the same high quality as its style. As it is, the reader can gain from it an excellent picture of some of the war's most important events, even though only a few of them were "colossal blunders."

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Some Recent Fiction

An Elegant Trifle

THE WEIGHER OF SOULS. By André Maurois. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1931. $2.

HERE is an elegant trifle, which comes surprisingly near to sentimentality for an author so witty and reasonable as M. Maurois. The hero is a scientist who has become convinced that the soul or personality has a physical existence, and who succeeds in verifying this belief by some extremely delicate experiments on newly dead bodies, which always show a tiny but invariable loss in weight which can be accounted for in no other way. He also demonstrates that this essence which leaves the body at death is lighter than air, can be caught in a bell-jar, and though normally invisible becomes fluorescent when subjected to certain rays.

This verification of the theory is a foregone conclusion with the reader, since if the experiments failed there would be no story whatever; one would be glad to grant a suspension of disbelief to this, as to any other scientific postulate an author thought necessary, as soon as asked to do so; but the experiments take up about half of the thin book. The reason for taking so long to establish the working hypothesis is no doubt that the plot which is reared on it is so very slight; instead of pursuing his researches into the nature of vitality, the destination of this essence, the possibility of reanimating corpses, or maintaining life eternally in the body, and all the other lines which the reader might have expected him to take, the scientist cares for his discovery only because he can arrange to have his soul bottled up in the same bell-jar with that of a lady he loves, who cannot live long. Accident prevents the course of true love from reaching even this consummation, and the book ends on a note of wistful pathos.

There is nothing actually to condemn in the book, but there is almost nothing to praise either. The most interesting passage in it is a conversation at the beginning where the scientist discusses with a friend the philosophical considerations for and against the existence of a personality separate from the physical brain. The arguments are so well marshalled as to lead one to hope for more significance than one is given in the story proper.

Pioneer Life

DARK BRIDWELL. By Vardis Fisher. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1931. $2.50.

Reviewed by Edwin L. Sabin

A COMMENT upon Mr. Fisher's preceding novel states: "As brutal as life itself." This present story, "Dark Bridwell," trends along the same lines of uncompromising realism in speech and actions.

The locale of "Dark Bridwell" is an isolated low bench-land of a canyon bottom of an Antelope Hills and a South Snake River country presumably in southwestern Idaho. The date is 1897 and thereafter. The theme of the story is the primitive existence, here, of Charley Bridwell and his family. For to this nook of solitude the easy-going, lazy, robust man-animal Bridwell trailed in with his young wife and children, and in the one-room log cabin upon the abandoned homestead of forty acres which he had purchased for seventeen dollars and a worthless horse he lived, careless of how he lived so long as his belly was full, for more than twenty years. The environments are so minutely described by the author, and the references to current legends of the "strange Bridwells" are so ingenious, that the story may be taken as a product of research work.

It, therefore, is a portrayal, in strong colors, of a phase (not fictitious, and to be recognized by some Westerners) of sporadic pioneer life upon the animal level, but it is lifted above the accepted pioneer and settler story by the characters who move through it upon the stage of majestic Nature.

Charley Bridwell, childlike, hulking, cunning, lawless, ingratiating, good-for-nothing, a parasite, as able as an Indian, indolent when not pushed by storm or hunger, upon some matters clean of mind and upon others wholly without morals did love his young wife but only to use her for his own selfish ends. Lela, the wife, of child mind, knew no better than to love him, until she matured and despised him. The girl, Beth, went the ways of a girl whose up-bringing and promptings have been mainly physical. The boys, particularly Jed, and the younger Ham (who at four had been encouraged by his father, in wanton spirit, to chew and swear) developed infected by their father's practices and by the teachings of depraved transients.

The results, in the story, are incidents and escapades set down in details revolting to read. And in due time this snarling litter, rather to the bewilderment of the father but to the understanding of the awakened mother, flee the rude home much as the river bursts from its penning canyon. Lela finally leaves — repudiating him whom she now sees as a slave-driver, "a big lazy thief" and "a big fat brute"; leaves him appalled by the utter collapse of the home structure which had been adequate to his own slothful habits, and uncomprehending the inevitableness of all this which had occurred. He also leaves, riding out alone into the unknown, and "by none who knew him was he ever seen again." The shack and the spasmodically cultivated acres, once more abandoned, and one of Lela's pitiful paintings, of the restless greedy river, remained.

Admittedly, "Dark Bridwell" is powerfully written. Whether the power might have been demonstrated as effectively by playing more upon the reader's intuition and less upon his outwardly directed sensations is for his finer impulses to decide.

The Writer's Problem

THE WINDING LANE. By Philip Gibbs. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1931. $2.50.

Reviewed by Ilah Niehoff

IN his latest novel Mr. Gibbs writes entertainingly of a young novelist who deserts his particular group of the London intelligentsia to find his soul among the winding lanes of Surrey. Established there in a tiny cottage he devotes himself to long, solitary walks and to intensive work on his new novel, shunning as much as possible the knowledge of his country neighbors. But the presence in their midst of a "writing fellow" cannot fail to interest the inhabitants of Harley Green and before long the novelist has met and fallen in love with and, after an interval, married the beautiful Pearl Jerningham, daughter of an aristocratic and impoverished county family. In the meantime his novel has appeared and become a best seller, making possible the establishment of a luxurious home for his wife in London.

At this point Mr. Gibbs, with irony and shrewd humor, takes a crack at the snobbishness of his fellow-writers. Brandon, darling of the critics for as long as his novels sold only a few hundred copies, becomes an outcast from his kind as soon as he ranks among the best sellers. Accused of pandering to his public and degrading his art, he receives cold glances from old cronies in Fleet Street and is cold-shouldered from his favorite haunt, the Pen and Palette Club. With the dictum of a friend to the effect that "when a novelist becomes a best seller he's dead as an artist. Virtue goes out of him. Never again can he write simply, unaffectedly, and sincerely," ringing in his ears, he sets to work at a new book, which is damned by the critics almost before it has a chance to be successful with the public. Poor Brandon is driven to the inevitable American tour whose receipts will make up the deficit necessary to meet the expenses of his wife's needs and the income tax.

Here at length we come face to face with the challenge proclaimed by the publishers on the dust wrapper. Brandon, the young novelist, faced with two dire necessities; the one of providing for the happiness of an extravagant wife with whom he is very much in love; the other the need to be about the real business of his life, in this case the writing of novels. Several solutions must have presented themselves to Mr. Gibbs. Indeed he suggests as much in the title of Brandon's first novel "The Way of Escape," but he avoids the necessity of seeing any of them through.

As a recurrent chorus Mr. Gibbs has chosen the theme of the downfall of the old order in England, and whenever two or more of the menfolk get together they launch into rather wordy discussion of the new manners and morals. But one expects Mr. Gibbs to plead a case through the medium of his characters, and in spite of this, as well as because of his felicity of phrase and very real ability to tell a story well, he has given us once more a sympathetic picture of an interesting character along with a diverting and entertaining tale.

Fact and Fiction

FOUR HANDSOME NEGRESSES: The Record of a Voyage. By R. Hernekin Baptist. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by Robert B. Macdougall

INSTEAD of the title as it is, "Four Noble Negresses" might have been more accurate. For the four ladies herein gloated over are merely female versions of our old literary friend, the noble savage. How he has persisted as a perennial stereotype in our literature, and how incurable in humanity has been the type of mind that continually flees to him as a refuge. In this particular incarnation he is as immaculate as ever—and, of course, the white man is down to the customary level of unrelieved vileness. The book impresses us as being a reflection of an intellectual dishonesty a good deal like that shown in, say, "East Lynne" or the exploits of Frank Merriwell. The noble savage never was the product of reputable ratiocination.

R. Hernekin Baptist, to whom the publishers refer as "the author who uses this name," sets out to suggest the fates of four negresses who were kidnapped from their African village by one of the first Portuguese commercial and evangelical expeditions to explore the southern seas. These negresses were later put ashore, severally, to spread the gospel and to pick up ivory and gold; but the plan was a failure, for the negresses proved to be ineffective saleswomen. Their fates were without exception tragic, and the fault was, in truth, civilization's. Quite plainly, this is a startling theme for a novel, a theme that for serious development demanded rare skill and intuition. Neither, apparently, was available.

Indeed, the very tone of the narrative is thoroughly wrong. Mr. Baptist (or the author who uses this name) lingers a good deal too caressingly over his exposition of the charms of these negresses' sleek bodies. After all, healthy sensuality may be excusable, but not the spirit of Peeping Tom. Even when this novelist is not bending to a keyhole, he writes with extravagant voluptuousness. Everything he touches seems to have about it an unhealthy, feverish air. His irony, which obviously pleases him, is elementary; and many of his rhapsodical passages need to be wrung out and hung up to dry.

Love in the Desert

THE SUBSTITUTE BRIDE. By Clare Sheridan. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1931. $2.

FOR the background of her novel, Mrs. Sheridan takes a large, commercialized oasis in the Sahara, Sidi Sersour, not far from Algiers. Here there are the tourists, the permanent colony of Europeans, the Arabian mob of guides, servants, beggars, and hangers-on; and, most important to the novel, El Caid, Arab chieftain, in the midst of his luxurious domestic establishment. Mrs. Sheridan does well with this setting, making it quite clear and credible. We feel that she is on familiar ground and we trust her.

Everything else in the novel, however, is shoddy and repulsive. The plot is silly: a young French girl goes to El Caid as a subsitute bride so that the intended bride can run away to marry an Englishman; the whole sequence of events is in the mood of sentimental melodrama. And then there is Mrs. Sheridan's unlovely preoccupation with the marriage customs of the Arabians; the spirit in which she records these customs is offensive to ordinary good taste. Nor is the book made any more palatable by the sententious remarks of the characters on the subjects of life and love. The much ridiculed Beatrice Fairfax is positively Proustian compared with Mrs. Sheridan when, for example, the latter asserts that "even the most charming man is a brute where women are concerned," or that "one is never any more sentimental or rough. Man has to be just a little feminine now, to appeal to women, and woman has to be just a little masculine to appeal to man."

But all these defects in the novel will only endear it the more to a vast number of twittery readers. They will squirm in delight over its talk of virginity and marriage-beds, and they will nod vacantly over the assertions that All Men are so-and-so and All Women thus-and-thus. Still, why should we begrudge them their vicarious sexual experiences? It seems somehow a pity, though—this whole business of literary pandering.

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Foreign Literature

Francis Viélé-Griffin

AN AMERICAN FRENCH POET: Francis Viélé-Griffin. Son Œuvre, Sa Pensée, Son Art. Par Jean de Cours. Paris: H. Champion. 1930.

Reviewed by ALBERT FEUILLERAT

NUMEROUS are the foreigners who, especially in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, wrote French poetry so successfully as to become naturalized in the literature of France. José Maria de Heredia, a Cuban, Helen Varcaresco, a Rumanian, Jean Moréas, a Greek, Madame de Noailles the descendant of an old Valachian family, two Americans, Stuart Merrill and Francis Viélé-Griffin, are only a few of the names that exemplify that curious literary phenomenon. But among those intellectual immigrants none occupies a more important place than the last named on the above list—Francis Viélé-Griffin, the son of General Louis Egbert Viélé, governor of Norfolk, Virginia, from 1862 to 1864. In the '90s he passed for the most conspicuous figure in the Symbolist School. Ever since his fame has been steadily growing and, quite lately, there has appeared an enthusiastic estimate of his poetry by Jean de Cours that unhesitatingly makes of him one of the greatest poets of France.

It should be said, to begin with, that the case of Viélé-Griffin is not so extraordinary as it seems to be. For this poet is the descendant of a long line of French Huguenots. One Arnault Viélé, a native of Lyons, emigrated to Holland and thence to New Amsterdam, in the seventeenth century. There he married the daughter of another refugee from Roubaix, Philippe de Thrieux, and in the course of time several Viélés allied themselves to other Huguenot families. So that French blood flowed generously in the veins of the boy when, in 1872, he went to Paris, at the age of nine, to be eduacted at Collège Stanislas. Indeed this was more like a prodigal son returning home than like a young alien attracted to the dazzling light of Parisian culture.

This no doubt explains why Viélé-Griffin entered so easily into the very spirit of his adopted country and was able to give such an exquisite image of the most characteristically French part of France. The background in a great number of his poems is that smiling valley, "guarded by the pale array of poplars," in which the noble river Loire lingeringly winds its silvery course among golden sands. No one has more felicitously rendered the subtle, delicate charm of that country of mellow landscapes —the jocund promise of the vineyards basking in the sun on the gently sloping hills, the sumptuous splendor of the wheatfields, the luxuriance of the meadows with their blue shadows and, above all, the fluid light that radiates from a royal azure sky. We must go back to Ronsard and to du Bellay in order to find an equally tender, intimate appreciation of the beauty of that very heart of France.

But if the poetical elements of the description are French, the spirit in which nature is approached is thoroughly American. It was not in vain that the Viélés had lived for nearly three centuries in a land which still possesses something of the burning energy of primeval existence. Viélé-Griffin carried in him accumulated dynamic impulses and he entered the placid old country with the zest of a pioneer. There is in his poetry the accelerated rhythm of sportive youth, the flush and quickly beating pulse of venturesome discoveries, a freshness of sensations that has led some critics to compare this author with Walt Whitman. The comparison does not hold, for the two men have very different temperaments. But it is true to say that there is in both the elastic, overflowing joy of the man who takes a nearly childish delight in the wonders of nature.

Like Whitman, also, Viélé-Griffin believes in the mystical value of life. The idea that life is the eternal principle behind every fact or sentiment permeates all his poems. Life, as Jean de Cours has well shown, is for Viélé-Griffin the "perfectly harmonious synthesis of all the forces, internal as well as external, ideal as well as real." It creates joy, and through joy, love, the sense of man's dignity, and the desire to reach that superior humanity which is beauty. And in this belief the poet found all the elements of a metaphysical conception of his own. For Viélé-Griffin—so far as such a thing can be said of any poet—is a philosophical poet. It is with him a conviction that poetical form is valueless unless it serves to clothe some profound idea. In a manifesto which he contributed to *L'Ermitage* in 1899, he wrote: "Generally speaking, we should like to say that the idea of form of which Plato and the Scholastics spoke in their time cannot be conceived abstractly in art; form in art is the form of something, notably of an idea; form without an idea is nothing." The idea which Viélé-Griffin slowly evolved all through his works is that life, with its chief manifestation action, finds its higher fulfilment only through death and sacrifice, but that, then, it partakes of immortality. We find this conception struggling for expression in the earlier volumes such as "Joies" (1888-9), "Les Cygnes" (1890-1); it acquires strength in "La Chevauchée d'Yeldis" (1893), "La Clarté de Vie" (1897), "Phocas" (1898), "La Partenza" (1899), "Wieland le Forgeron" (1900); it expands and triumphs in the later works, "L'Amour Sacré" (1900-3), "La Lumiére de Grèce" (1912), "Voies d'Ionie" (1914), "Le Domaine Royal" (1923), "Le Livre des Reines" (1929), &c.

Self-denial, renunciation are the surest means by which we can satisfy our aspirations. All the heroes created by Viélé-Griffin in his dramatic and narrative pieces —Phocas, Swanhilde, Sapho, Wieland, Bellerophon, the martyrs and saints in "L'Amour Sacré," &c.—exemplify that heroic conception of life: they all give up their loves, their hopes, their own selves for the sake of some noble idea in which they find an exalting compensation.

This insistence upon the importance of thought in poetry, with its consequent idealistic conception of the world, together with the use of free verse which he advocated and helped to establish firmly in France, designated Viélé-Griffin for the role of leader of the symbolist movement. And no doubt it would be difficult to maintain that he does not belong to that school of poetry. But is he a symbolist in the more narrow sense of the word? It is one of the merits of the book already quoted that it aids us to answer that question. In the course of his minute study Jean de Cours has well disentangled the classical elements which enter into the texture of Viélé-Griffin's poetry, the chief of them being probably an instinctive yearning for a general, moral interpretation of the world in terms of its universal significance. Viélé-Griffin's symbols are the natural expression of some real fact which they only clothe with beautiful, original suggestions. The art in this process of transposition always remains pure, simple, and luminous. And thus the poet avoided the defect into which fell the most extravagant among the symbolists: obscurity for obscurity's sake, taken as a sign of profundity. His poetry has the genuine limpidity that goes with the discovery of essential truth. In this sense it is right to say that Viélé-Griffin continues the tradition of La Fontaine and Racine, and that this American by birth deserves to hold a most honorable place among the best French poets of all times.

South American Novels

TRASMUNDO. By CARLOS ALBERTO LEUMANN. Buenos Aires: Editorial La Facultad. 1930.

MIERCOLES SANTO. By MANUEL GÁLVEZ. The same.

Reviewed by HERMINE HALLAM-HIPWELL

CARLOS Alberto Leumann is an Argentine novelist whose work in the past has called forth considerable comment. At one time on the editorial staff of *La Nación*, the leading daily newspaper which runs a Sunday Supplement remarkable for the high literary quality of its contributions, well known men in both Europe and the United States writing for its pages, he is the author of three novels and an interesting, if biassed and strongly anti-clerical, treatise, "La Iglesia y El Hombre" (Mother Church and Man). A new novel by Leumann is therefore something of an event in the dull routine of a reviewer's life in Buenos Aires, where so many books are written yet so very few are really worth reading.

A delicate and profound student of feminine psychology, Leumann's first novel, "Adriana Zumarań," contained a remarkable analysis of Argentine girlhood, a trifle overdrawn perhaps and therefore not applicable to the majority, yet surely true of those more extreme cases to be met with in the old *criollo* families where intermarriage and the harem-like seclusion of the women-folk have evolved a type which is undoubtedly fascinating from the novelist's point of view. In his latest work, Leumann has continued his studies in feminine psychology but instead of giving his readers an exquisite delineation of Latin womanhood, pliant and mysterious, set against the background of middle-class Buenos Aires society, he has chosen to invade regions supernatural and superterrestial under an appearance of recounting ordinary events. The whole atmosphere of this book, from the delightful little design in blue and gold and black by Sirio which decorates the cover, to the short note to the reader on the title page in which the author insists that the narrative contained in the book is more real than life itself, is unusual, even as the style in which the opening sentences are written is unusual. "Trasmundo" is a work that deserves to be widely read, for it marks a new and interesting departure in Argentine fiction, and is at the same time a very finished example of a literary style that is purely South American—owing little or nothing to the great traditions of Castilian literature.

"Miercoles Santo" affords a sharp contrast to "Trasmundo." Carlos Alberto Leumann is a dreamer, whereas Manuel Gálvez is first and foremost a realist to whom style is of secondary importance. In this short book, the author has described with a great wealth of detail the day of a Catholic priest on Easter Wednesday when the faithful file past the confessional to lay on the confessor's shoulders the heavy burden of their sins, whispered between sighs and sobs through the iron grille.

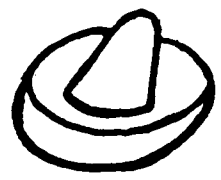
It is the struggle which takes place within the priest's heart, the struggle between the darkness and the light continuing throughout the day, which forms the plot of the book. The priest believes that the Devil himself has appeared to him, in the person of a penitent who mocks him with bitter words, and he is bewildered and put at a loss by this visitation which is repeated later in the day under more tragic circumstances. The book ends inconclusively, with the priest falling down dead after having given absolution to the last of his people—those who come to his rescue believe it is the heat that is responsible for his death, not knowing of his evil visitants during the day, nor of the malignant force which flung him down when his task was ended.

"Miercoles Santo," cannot be compared with some of Manuel Gálvez's earlier works, the central theme lacks coherence, and there is some doubt left in the reader's mind concerning the nature of the priest's temptation. It is, however, interesting to the non-Catholic in that it gives a very accurate description of the confessional and the place it holds in the life of the average Catholic. As is usual in Gálvez's works the writing is clear and graphic, and though he is not a great stylist he writes with vigor using a Spanish which is easily followed even by those whose knowledge of the language is not very profound.

"Oxford," says the London *Observer*, "has relaxed towards the muse of fiction. Thackeray, on seeking leave to lecture, found that the authority to whom he was remitted had heard of no 'Vanity Fair' but Bunyan's and conceived of *Punch* as 'a ribald publication.' The Public Orator, on presenting Mr. Galsworthy for his degree last week, confessed that 'his great Forsyte Saga has spent for me many unregrettted nights.' *Tempora mutantur* he might have said—but that is doubtless too trite for Encaenia purposes."

"I like MEXICO" says STUART CHASE

"I like its colour, its violence, its raw tumbling mountains, green checkerboard valleys, purple blue sky and stabbing sun. I like its crumbling monasteries and cathedrals, the little shaded plazas, so cool when all the world is hot. I like the quiet, grave-eyed children; the patient, stubborn asses; the compact villages, each with its ruined church tower.



"I like the village markets, the lacquer, the pottery, the carved chocolate-beaters; the tumbling bronze bells welcoming in the fiesta. I like the way Indians look, the way they walk, the polite *'Buenos tardes'* they fling one on the trail; their dignity I like, their utter lack of pretense, their disregard of clocks, the tilt of their sombreros and the fling of the sarape across the shoulder. Above all I like their magnificent inertia, against which neither Spain nor Europe nor Western Civilization has prevailed.

"I do not like White Mexicans so well. I do not like politicos and gun-toters — particularly generals —nor their mistresses, bars, or bullfights. I do not like all Mexican odors, especially when cross-referenced to sanitation. I am convinced all native chauffeurs, outside of Yucatan, are stark, staring mad.

"I do not like Mexican dust storms, *molés*, newspapers, beggars, meat shops, money systems, thorns, matches, postcards, dogs, butter, hornets or coffee. These are, however, the trivia of the unacclimatized wayfarer, fading before the grandeur and mystery of the whole scene. It must be a great experience to be born in Mexico, and to have such a land to come back to and call home."

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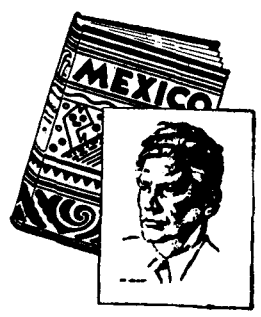

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A Sea Brief

By Captain David W. Bone

Sailors are the only class of men who now-a-days see anything like stirring adventure: and many things which to fireside people appear strange and romantic, to them seem as commonplace as a jacket out at elbows. Yet, notwithstanding the familiarity of sailors with all kinds of curious adventure, the incidents recorded in the following pages have often served, when "spun as a yarn," not only to relieve the weariness of many a night-watch at sea, but to excite the warmest sympathies of the author's shipmates. He has been therefore led to think that his story could scarcely fail to interest those who are less familiar than the sailor with a life of adventure.

Herman Melville's Preface to "Typee."

TODAY, with books of romantic adventure and seafaring interest listed by every publisher, one would hesitate to approve that extract from a Preface of 1846. I wonder if there are any "fireside people" now, or is not the janitor in the basement the last survivor? A study of recent publications prompts the thought that the fireside people have actually set out to see for themselves, to seek their own adventures at first hand. There is little hardship involved: the tourist agencies have most of the world's thrills covenanted in the purchase of a ticket for a cruise abroad. Few return from such a voyage without the urge to place their experiences upon record or, at least, to make them the subject of an address to the local lions. In other years, the publication of such narratives could only be undertaken at the expense of the venturesome author, but nowadays the publisher is himself more adventurous. If the author is prepared to allow the work to be edited in a manner suited to the current public taste, a voyage into the open book market may be begun. Provided the editor has skilfully incited controversy upon some point, a surprisingly good landfall is often made.

It is not very difficult to identify the writers as formerly fireside people, keen readers of traveler's tales. While the spirit in which the matters are presented is certainly of modern high pressure, the text is rarely other than reminiscent of an earlier and finer hand. As book succeeds book, the standard quality of the composition is manifest. It is plain that a convention is being observed, that a clear formula is in use: one might term it a standard prescription, not difficult of dispension by even an ill practitioner of letters. The elements of the mixture may indeed be remarked in any casual reading. There is first the vagabondage of the narrator, an essential part, if the author hopes to be condoned for rude expression. This component has the merit of purging serious criticism (later on, the advertising men may rate such harsh quality as "personality") and it acts finely with the attitude of contempt for the decencies of sincere writing. Sex is an important ingredient, but it should be administered in incalculable quantity. It is imperative that the dispenser should not err. He must endow himself with all the moral strength of a Saint Anthony, but he can be tolerant of the lapses in others that he may observe —and let him give good measure of their amorous adventures. Finally, the mixture must be well shaken, for then the high ebullience of the narrator is revealed.

On occasion, the standard practice is ignored. In the ruck, a book of worth appears, one that borrows nothing from the three-ring acrobatics of a Halliburton or a Lowell or a Wright. Such a book is "Seven Months and Seven Days" (Doubleday, Doran: $3), by Kag Klitgaard. It came to me almost in company with "Ocean Parade" (McBride: $3), by Fritjoff Michelson and Leon Byrne. I can best advance my cause by a comparison of the two books. They are both descriptive of seafaring in modern American cargo steamers, written by members of the crew. There are eyes and no-eyes. Klitgaard is an artist of very keen perceptions. His book is the best and most understanding record of modern seafaring that I have yet read. Within itself, it has no blemish of insincere writing. One lives with the writer in his watch on deck and below, in his shore leave, in his thoughts and comments. He assumes no pose as vagabond or sex-expert. Where frankness can serve to point the necessarily monastic character of sea life, he is frank. Where sincerity can impress the reader with the emotion that urged his pen, he is sincere. A quiet, unboisterous humor distinguishes the book. Even the man who cheated at cards gets no more punishment than a round of derisive laughter. (In a real "rip-snorting" book like "Ocean Parade," he would at the least have had his head laid open by a "dead marine.")

It is difficult to understand why this exceedingly good book has not attracted the attention it deserves. I would hazard a guess that its somewhat dull title has alienated the busy reviewer. Seven months, etc. sounds like a book of chronometer rates.

"Ocean Parade" is a typical standard mixture, dispensed by two young journalists who sailed in the *West Wanderer* on a voyage to the far east. They shipped as dubious seamen and, in alternate chapters, record the incidents of their personation. They have an excellent title for the book. One gains the impression that a close review of seafaring is presented. Alas! Never were fond hopes more patently discouraged. But for one chapter in which the torpedoing of the *President Lincoln* is graphically described, there is nothing in the book but what a clever artist has put upon the jacket.

* *

For sailors who have a tale to tell, but no great skill at the writing of it, assistance is not difficult to obtain. There seems to be no dearth of "sea-ghosts" eager and willing to act the part of the wedding guest —but certainly not to stand overstill at the recital. Although one would not care greatly to sign shipmates with such venturesome fellows for a winter passage round the Horn, one cannot but admit their skill in keeping a good offing and steering clear of the major shoals. How is it done? There must surely be some course in nautical assessment taught at the colleges. Perhaps wide reading and a retentive memory would serve. Given such qualifications and a flair for popularly current taste in "sea stories," not Ford himself could standardize a more marketable commodity. If the book is well written, one would be captious indeed to point the minor flaws of technical inaccuracy (did not Kipling himself quote the barometer in degrees instead of inches?) but even competent sea-ghosts strain themselves unduly in the effort to meet the conventions of a "briny" atmosphere. Their sailor is always a "hard-fisted sea-dog," and the miles of his voyaging are advanced as warrant for the verity of his tale. That too might be forgiven, but the patent insincerity that is so often noticeable in these "ghost" books is deplorable. Discarding the simple language of his narrator, the editor frequently mars the tale by fantastic hyperbole. In Captain Dean's story of the "Pedro Gorino," the editor (an indifferent sea-ghost) lets himself go.

We plotted our course in a great circle from the Lizards to Funchal, and went bowling along piling up knot after knot. Far out on the wild Atlantic we had no thought of the Biscayan tides, but were surrounded by porpoises even before we came to cloudless Madeira and the pearl Teneriffe, set as they were in a sea of glass.

"Knot after knot?" "A sea of glass," and they in a tops'l schooner, without power! And what is the connection between porpoises and the tides in the Bay? I admit that it sounds like English, lyrical English indeed, but I am sure that the printer who set it up stopped his machine to consult his foreman: or maybe he just said "Oh, Good Lord," threw up his job, and went off to Hackensack to write a book.

I am led to consideration of all this by the sudden dilation of my mail bag. Were I a columnist with a daily task to fulfil, I would welcome this "manna from strange Gods," but my feelings are now mixed, compound of interest quickened and regret that I cannot embark on one or another of the many ventures proposed. Having had the misfortune to report sick some time ago, my absence from an active sea life has apparently been noticed, and correspondents— many of them hitherto unknown to me— feel that I may find refreshment in literary work, mainly of an editorial nature. I am invited to become a sea-ghost, to ship as pilot in joint endeavors intended upon the high seas of literature. Alas, I have neither the competence nor the pretension to apply myself to the ordering of another helm, the trimming of another's sail. I am well now, and thank my correspondents for their cordials.

Here is A. B. of Trenton in New Jersey. He was for many years a seaman, an officer in the Guion Line in the days when those shapely sisters, the *City of Paris* and the *City of New York* were making short work of the Atlantic passage. He encloses a tale of his experiences, not uninteresting, but somewhat clouded by a resolve that his memory shall not fail although the heavens fall. He is very insistent upon his bona fides; he submits his last signed by the master. It is apparent from his letter that he has been deeply interested in a late controversy regarding the authenticity of a sea-woman's biography published not long ago. He is rather tiresome in his submission of proof. His facts are so ponderous and important that they loom over his horizon like the portents of heavy weather. The writer is, himself, but dimly visible: he remains shrouded in a squall of dull figures and statistics.

If A.B. is somewhat nebulous and indistinct, C.D. who ran from his ship at San Francisco in 1895, stands out by reason of his assurance. He writes to me in impressive terms. He has a bright idea for a film scenario. He hesitates to make his subject plain, refers—in very handsome terms—to a book which I wrote some years ago, and desires an earnest of my good faith ere disclosing his theme. I surmise that he cannot have very vivid memories of his early sea days: his writing stamps him as an ardent student of the films. I hope that, unlike myself, he has discovered one believable seaman (other than the gallant old Dutchman in "Anna Christy") on the screen.

* *

Among my correspondents G.H. earns my undying gratitude for a pure elixir. He has no famous schemes to propound, no tangles of co-partnery to submit, but thinks that the Journal of his great-uncle, which he sends to me, may be of interest. Of interest? I wish I had no literary work of my own in progress that I might devote attention to the treasure that has come so unexpectedly into my hands. It is a small leather-covered book of pocket size; not a very bulky addition to the impedimenta of such a campaign as that described within it. It is written in fine script, in what used to be called Italian hand, the ink reddened to the hue of rust in the years since 1805. The ambition of the writer fully to record his experiences is indicated by the noble scroll that adorns the title page.

JOURNAL FROM THE COVE OF CORK
to the Cape of Good Hope and from thence to Buenos Ayres.

July 31, 1805. Embarked on board the *Indefatigable* transport, Captain Womford, the Seventy-first Regt.

Sir David Baird, K. G., Commander-in-Chief, with the following ships of War, viz, *Diadem*, *Diomede*, *Encounter*, *Belliguex*, *Narcissus*, and *Leda*. Sailed in company, the Honble. East India Company's Fleet.

One can fully understand the pride that was in the diarist as he penned, with emphatic downstroke and conscious paraph, the title page of his book. Around him, in the Cove o' Cork, would lie at anchor the fleet and convoy, perhaps forty sail in all. In the stir of it there would be a sense of great adventure impending, and certainly there would be "sealed orders" for "to the Cape of Good Hope and from thence to Buenos Ayres" has been written at a later date than the fine flourish of "Journal from the Cove of Cork." The new broom in his hand (the writer was adjutant of his battalion) would be irking to clear the decks and set all fair for the routine of the voyage. Small matters, the issue of fresh vegetables, the settlement of the married quarters, (the Seventy-first went to war in full connubial strength), are set down in simple periods: there is little in the early pages to herald the later fury in action. Writing as a Briton with some knowledge of national adventures, I can recall no intimate record of the taking of the Cape, nor of the capitulation and imprisonment of British forces at Buenos Ayres in 1807. There are doubtless the official records at Whitehall, but I am sure these records lack the life and color that are so simply and so believably set down in the adjutant's time-stained book. There is no proper end to his diary, no safe return from abroad, no fine sunset with a close-up of the principal. When he penned his conjectures aboard of the *Indefatigable* at Madeira, he had but slight inkling of a bloody landing at the Cape. He could have no foreboding of surrender at the city on the Plate or of the long campaign on the Spanish Peninsula. The last entry reads, under date of January 10, 1809, at Corruna in Spain, "This day and the night before, hundreds of poor fellows have fallen into the hands of the enemy." The great retreat would be in process as he made the note, his hand not faltering in the script. His fate is left to conjecture. Perhaps, like his indomitable leader, Sir John Moore, he was buried darkly after the famous stand that bore victory from retreat.

I must again express my gratitude to G.H. I found the Journal of his great-uncle more invigorating than any restorative listed in the Pharmacopœia. His relative must have been endowed with uncommon powers of observation and an uncanny ability to make another eye see his pictures of voyaging, of camp life, and battle, as vividly as his own. In his journal there is all the material for an excellent book. I am convinced that there is, somewhere, a public that would welcome its publication. Numerically, not a very great public, but one of discernment and appreciative of a straightforward narrative devoid of artifice. I gather, from the note enclosed with the journal, that my correspondent has no empurpled dreams of fabricating a "best seller." I feel that he will agree with me on many points, principally that the time is not propitious for the publication of a book classed as "general literature" and of a seriously authentic character. To put "The Odyssey of a Great-Uncle" upon the market of to-day, in competition with the oddments of forgotten volumes now advanced as original work, one would have to delve into the mustard pot and smear the obviously truthful diarist with specious tints that are not even faintly revealed in his neat Italian script. For admiration of the diarist, I hope his relative will seek no stirring publisher. I fear the doings of a robust fellow who might write to him a letter like this—

Dear Sir,

I have had great difficulty in procuring your book, "The Odyssey of a Great-Uncle," from our literary reader, he being still under the impression that he is employed to advise us on matters of publication. I like the book. It is great stuff, but hardly meaty enough—as it stands—to enable our writers-up to expend a sufficiency of persuasive adjectives upon it.

Something might be done, however, to lift it from its present shape. Could we not bring in a patch of color here and there? These soldiers were gay dogs anyway. But they couldn't just write about it as we do to-day. So, what about interpretation, in the light of modern ideas? There is a passage where the writer refers to some shindy in the married quarters aboard the *Indefatigable*. We might make a point of that. Some soldier (he would have to be a sergeant at least) caught *in flagrante delicto*, eh?

Then that landing through the surf at the Cape! What stubborn heroism! The Highland Brigade at the charge, holding their muskets arm-high to keep the powder dry. Great stuff. But we might have the soldiers at their ease after the fighting. The Hottentots wouldn't care much who won, I suppose, but we could set them up in high spirits. The officers of the Army would want to see the country after they had fought for it. A war dance, eh? The maidens of the tribes dancing to celebrate the victory? Of course, they would have to have a rag or two on at the beginning, but we could work 'em up to a pretty general discard in the excitement. I know where we can get the dope. I am sure there is a page or two about it in, let me see . . . Hutcheson's "Customs of the World" . . . or the good old "Golden Bough."

The incidents in the Spanish Peninsula are mighty fine, but there isn't enough revelation there for 1930. We might trim that up a bit. . . . I have it! James Grant. Nobody reads James nowadays. . . . "The Romance of War," that's it. We could get it all there. Spanish señoritas, marching soldiers, convents, nuns! Gee, I'd like to do it.

I have talked to the boys about it and they are all primed up with enthusiasm already. They all think the convents and the nuns would be the noise. I am sure we can put this over BIG.

Yours etc.
C. Ghost
Publicity Director.

Some day, when this business of seafaring becomes too hard for me, I shall write a "Primer for Sea-Ghosts." I shall point out that the editor of a sailor's tale need not be the superior, in point of nautical version, of his narrator. Nor, indeed, should any writer presume to tamper with the egõity of his character.

Lowell Thomas makes no mistake in his grisly story of the "Wreck of the Dumaru" (Doubleday, Doran. $2.50). Himself an adventurer, he knows better than to paraphrase the simple but convincing words of his narrator. He interposes no fanciful barrier between Frederick J. Harmon, the Assistant Engineer of the ill-fated ship, and the reader. No polished phrase could vie with the simple words of the eyewitness of all the horrors of quasi-cannibalism in an open boat.

Mr. Lowell Thomas is probably the best literary pilot a seaman could have to conduct his story through the press. I rate him a first class hand; like Defoe—the exemplar—he steers wisely on the course his narrator would choose. First assistant engineer Harmon is never allowed to mumble but an accompaniment to his editor's polemics, he is encouraged to "sing out" (as we say at sea) his tale, "plainly and without varnish." The reading of this book, which came to me after I had set out the heads of this essay, convinces me that I am not clawing the empty air. Like a clever and understanding barrister, Thomas leads his witness, but encourages him to state such truth that a jury of readers cannot but accept it as an oath.

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Art

ANIMALS IN GREEK SCULPTURE. By GISELA M. A. RICHTER. Oxford University Press. 1930.

Greek sculpture is so intimately associated with the portrayal of the human body that it is well that we should be occasionally reminded of other elements which contributed to its richness. Miss Richter has done a great service in presenting this brief survey of the animals, other than man, which furnished models to the Greek sculptor. The layman (and many archæologists) will be surprised to find that there are twenty-six animals and twelve birds, not counting a few odd insects, arachnids, fish, batrachians, etc. The list is not entirely complete: there are no molluscs in the book; the number of varieties of fish might be increased; for some reason the sea tortoise of the Ægineton coins is omitted, though the land tortoise is given. But of course the author has no intention of completeness and minor omissions do not affect the success of the work.

The real *raison d'être* of the book is the fine plates which give 236 figures, beginning with a lion and ending with a lizard (salamander?). Half of the text is a formal description of these plates; the other half a short critical and historic commentary, giving references to further important material. The horse is the only creature on which the classic artist spent a care or with which he achieved a result comparable to his success with the human form. Most of the others are frankly incidental to what he conceived as his great function. Let these plates testify in many instances to an accuracy and sympathy of observation which those would do well to notice who are still inclined to accept Ruskin's famous essay on "Classical Landscape" at its face value.

Belles Lettres

WILLA CATHER. By RENE RAPIN. McBride. 1930. $1.50.

This eighth volume of the Modern American Writers series is a thoughtful and intelligent critical analysis of the works of Willa Cather up to and including "Death Comes for the Archbishop." Mr. Rapin has carefully stated his own temerity in making estimate of a writer in mid-career and he comes to his statement of enthusiastic recognition of Miss Cather's greatness only after what sometimes seems academically minute and unnecessarily harsh criticism of the less excellent portions of her works. The book is brief to stinginess in its biographical material, yet, with its admirable bibliography, it will be valuable to students of contemporary literature.

Fiction

BACKFIRE. By DANIEL CHASE. Bobbs-Merrill. 1931. $2.

Here is the pleasant landscape of southern New England, with its little villages, its gentle hills, and its picturesque country roads. Against this background we have a love story of the old-fashioned kind, where the suspense can be strung out to the length of a novel only by the barefaced device of having the youngsters stupidly and endlessly misunderstand each other. For added interest, Mr. Chase sets his hero to driving rum-running trucks, and thus we have some fairly interesting, though in these days noticeably soft-boiled, descriptions of the trips from the Connecticut and Cape Cod shores through to Boston. In short, "Backfire" is good enough light reading, an innocuous tale for an uncritical mood.

Miscellaneous

A STUDY OF BOWS AND ARROWS. By SAXTON T. POPE. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1930.

This is a reprint, in attractive format, of a paper published in 1923, under the same title, in the series of University of California Publications in American Archæology and Ethnology. The late Mr. Pope devoted many years to the study of bows and arrows, and his knowledge of practical archery was very well known. While the work does not pretend to include all known classes of these implements, it is sufficiently comprehensive to afford a good insight into them. Bows of various types are described and illustrated, and the characteristic features, penetration, velocity, striking force, rigidity, feathering and rotation of arrows, together with the features and efficiency of arrowpoints, are likewise treated, with adequate illustrations. Perhaps the fastidious reader will regret the exclusion of arrow release, which, however, is largely a topic all its own that may be followed by looking up the two extended contributions to the subject by that great scholar, the late Professor Edward S. Morse.

Philosophy

A HANDBOOK OF CHILD PSYCHOLOGY. The International University Series in Psychology. Edited by CARL MURCHISON. Clark University Press. 1931.

Twenty-two authorities have here attempted to gather between the covers of one volume the accumulations of knowledge in the field of child psychology. The purpose of the book is to summarize "as problems experimentally investigated, a field of scientific research surprisingly full of accomplishment and promise even to some of the experts in the field itself." In general this purpose has been carried out. The work of some twelve hundred individuals interested in child psychology is quoted. Owing to necessary brevity, the chief function of the book, both discussion and bibliographies, must be to serve as a starting point for students who are interested in any of the phases of child psychology chosen for inclusion.

Because of the recency of the attack upon certain of the problems of child psychology, it is more difficult for some of the collaborators to speak with authority than it is for others. Certain of the facts given have been verified by numbers of research workers, modified and tested by the passage of time, as for example those found in the chapter on feeble-mindedness. Facts and theories given in other chapters may be very quickly antedated, as more workers converge on the problems as points of interest. This may be true of what one finds in the chapter on the social behavior of the child. In still other chapters, notably the one on the primitive child, the search for facts is frankly projected into the future. Problems profitable for research are discussed.

A second unevenness in quality results from the fact that the point of view shifts back and forth from pure to applied science. Education, sociology, mental hygiene, hover on the periphery, ever ready to encroach on the present-day, ill-defined limits of the pure science of child psychology. The chapters on Eating, Sleeping, and Elimination, and the Experimental Construction of an Environment Optimal for Mental Growth, might almost be termed popular, while the chapter on the Eidetic Child can only be of interest to scientists well equipped with the current psychological terminology.

Although the topics chosen for summarization are fairly inclusive, certain omissions are open to criticism. There is, for example, no reference to the work in physiological psychology which has special bearing on the developmental aspects of child psychology. Brief though such a chapter must be, its value to the students for whom the book was avowedly written would be at least equivalent to that of many of those included. Any book of this nature must, however, frequently appear in a new edition if it is to have anything but historical interest. There is, then, opportunity for the book to change and grow with the new branch of science with which it deals.

Science

BIOLOGY IN HUMAN AFFAIRS. Edited by EDWARD M. EAST. Whittlesey House. 1931. $3.50.

This is a book of essays by various well-known authorities on the biological aspects of human welfare. A great variety of subjects is discussed, ranging from genetics to industrial psychology. It is natural that in a work of this kind the standard of presentation should be somewhat uneven; certain of the authors show too great enthusiasm over minor details. While some of the contributions are strictly practical, the book includes several studies of the theoretical basis of applied biological science, including a remarkable account of the methodology of physiological research by Dr. E. K. Marshall. The collection should be of value to the non-scientific reader in two ways. In the first place it presents reliable information on special physiological and psychological problems of human interest, well calculated to demonstrate that "there is all Africa and her prodigies in us." Secondly Dr. East's admirable introduction and certain of the succeeding essays emphasize the importance of biological discovery in molding our philosophical outlook. Such intellectual applications of biology are quite as important as the practical but are in greater danger of neglect or misrepresentation.

One of the best articles is Dr. East's account of modern genetical research. Perhaps the most important task ahead of Applied Biology is the study and control of the diverse elements constituting a human population. The theoretical treatment of this subject involves considerable genetical and mathematical knowledge, available only to specialists. If this knowledge is ever to be applied, the general public must be brought to realize its existence and importance. One notes that Dr. East is somewhat sceptical of the dicta of the more vociferous eugenists. His practical suggestions for population control are limited to the regulation of the population of the United States by a more carefully planned and rigorous set of immigration laws. Such a policy should work admirably so long as Europe consents to be submitted to an annual cream-skimming process; it lacks however that air of impartial generality which is supposed to be an attribute of the scientific mind.

Sociology

THE FAMILY. By FRANZ MÜLLER-LYER. Translated by F. W. STELLA BROWN. Knopf. 1931. $5.

This book is one of a series and is written to illustrate the author's "phaseological method." "This method divides the history of human culture and civilization into periods and phases. On comparing these distinct phases one with another, the investigator perceives lines of evolution, i.e., trends which persist throughout each phase and reveal to us the direction of culture and progress. And from the study of these lines of direction, we may deduce the laws of human evolution or social development." Accordingly, the history of the family is divided into phases: the tribal age, the familial age, and the personal age. The family further falls into the classification of geneonomy, which is "the sum of all those sociological manifestations which directly or indirectly concern human reproduction and the problems of generation."

As one proceeds through the four hundred pages of Dr. Müller-Lyer's work, human geneonomy falls into well-appointed pigeon holes. The tribal phase follows the prehistoric period "lasting from the discovery of fire till the invention and utilization of artificial sources of food." As land becomes more scarce, the kinship phase becomes obsolete and is followed by the familial phase and the State appears. The decline of the family in ancient times is attributed to the absolute right of inheritance. In modern times, we come to the individual or personal phase when the family loses function after function; woman "slowly becomes self-supporting, self-determining, and also politically active;" . . . "the traditional form of marriage, indissoluble, patriarchal, and compulsory monogamy is felt as obsolete and inadequate. . . . The world is the home of free individuals in well-constructed and organized communities. But whether or not those nations at present most advanced have the power and wisdom to steer their ships into the port of this new world and to land, that only the future can reveal."

"The Family" is primarily a classification, a setting in order of the past. It is well documented although much of the material comes from secondary sources and as an anthropologist, Dr. Müller-Lyer has neither the imagination nor the personal experience of Westermarck. Woman, Race, Capitalism, State, etc., are all bloodless abstractions that are defined and about which the author comes to logical conclusions. The historical material and interpretations here presented are "old stuff" to those of us who work in sociology and the conclusions as to our present stage of development have become self-evident to the most casual observer. The "dynamic" concept has destroyed the old physics and the old biology and has swept over economics, psychology, and sociology. Whether the world will again appear as simple and well-ordered as it did to Dr. Müller-Lyer or whether we will again know enough about it to build a new set of pigeon holes, remains to be seen. In the meantime, this work of a German scholar, admirable as it is, has no more than academic interest for the sociologist and to try to "deduce the laws of human evolution," scholar and layman alike must turn to the works of sociologists on the ground such as Mowrer and the Lynds.

Books of lasting charm and value

LIGHT-HORSE HARRY LEE
by Thomas Boyd
author of "Mad Anthony Wayne," etc.
"The life of Lee presents a tangle of romance and tragedy and offers the popular historian a splendid opportunity. Thomas Boyd has made the most of it. The volume deserves recognition both from the general reader and the scholar."
—*New York Herald Tribune.* $3.50

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by Paul van Dyke
author of "Catherine de Médicis," etc.
"Professor van Dyke has used his sources with great skill and without bias for or against. Washington emerges no less great and much more credible."
—*London Times. Illustrated.* $2.50

THE GRASS ROOF
by Younghill Kang
The biography of a young Korean. "Almost the only book to introduce us to a virtually unknown people. An interesting, an important, and a memorable book."—*The New Republic.*
Second printing $3.00

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"Adventure was as the breath of life to Richard Francis Burton. With graphic sympathy Fairfax Downey tells the thrilling story. . . . Excitement and unflagging interest will mark your reading of it."—*New York Sun.* $3.00

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Twelve internationally famous scientists and clergymen contribute their opinions to this book. Among them are A. S. Eddington, Dean Inge, Julian Huxley, and L. P. Jacks. The foreword is by Michael Pupin. E. F. Edgett, in the *Boston Transcript*, says the book affords "a decidedly intellectual stimulus . . . it will stir any reader either to violent agreement or disagreement."
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Indian Books for Children

By F. W. HODGE

Museum of the American Indian

WITH such a surge of books for juveniles one is almost led to wonder whether there are enough English-reading children in the world to digest all of them! Even aside from those that can hardly be recommended for perusal by our youngsters, there never was a time when such a range of topics was available to suit the taste of every child, and the end is not yet. Nor has there ever been a time since the days of Cooper or of Samuel Griswold Goodrich (whom our great-grandfathers remember as Peter Parley) that such interest in our Indians has been manifested by old and young alike, as witness the splendid books on these First Americans issued within the last few years. With all the authoritative material readily at hand, there is little excuse nowadays for children's books, however fictional they may be, to have any but a background based on historical and ethnological verity. To have an Indian tribe which followed the life of buffalo hunters take on any part of the culture of a sedentary agricultural people is worse than nonsense, for it instils in the young mind nought but confusion as to what the Indians really were and are.

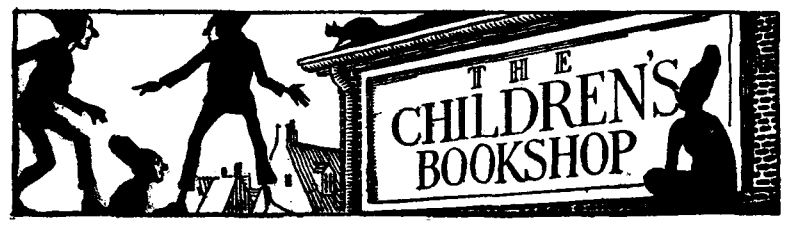
What may be said in criticism of so many present-day books for children does not apply to those of James Willard Schultz, whose latest, "The White Beaver" (Houghton Mifflin: $1.75), is obviously a chapter of his own boyhood life among the Pikúni or Piegan division of the Blackfoot Confederacy, which he knows so intimately. It is the author's thirty-first volume on the Indians, all entertaining and most of them very instructive. In "The White Beaver," the white boy of the story, Richard Ellis seventeen years of age, went in 1862 from St. Louis with his father, a trader, and two French trappers to Fort Benton, Montana, a post of the American Fur Company in the midst of a camp of 6000 Blackfoot Indians. The lad is welcomed by the Indians, who name him Generous Raven, and becomes the bosom companion and friend of No Runner, a boy of his own age. Intimate friendships of the Damon-and-Pythias or David-and-Jonathan kind were not uncommon among the Plains tribes, and when such a companionship was formed it was at least as close as that which subsisted between blood-brothers. No Runner's sister, Star Woman, who is an "almost sister" of Generous Raven, is encouraged to dedicate herself to the Sun as a virgin warrior. To put herself to the test she accompanies her brother and Generous Raven on a hunting trip, during which many of the hardships of the hunters' life are experienced, not excepting a narrow escape from enemy warriors at night. The story of the hunt is replete with thrilling episodes and incidentally relates much of Blackfoot custom and belief while on the trail and in camp. It is an excellent book.

We wish we could say as much of "White Heron Feather," by Gertrude Robinson (Harpers: $2), a story of the Indians of Maine in the seventeenth century. It is the tale of Elizabeth Converse, known as Nausaka, whose mother, Nusingee, had been captured by raiding Indians a month before her birth and exchanged to the "Kennibis," of whom Awashonks, a squaw sachem, treated them royally because of the desire of her son, Tispaquin, to marry the white girl some day. Nausaka is sixteen when the story opens, and the hateful marriage seems imminent. The book is the chronicle of her adventures in the effort to escape it and of the consequences that flow from her endeavors.

If the youthful reader is looking for excitement he will be sure to find it in Miss Robinson's book, and he will get also a glimpse of many things the Maine Indians never thought of doing. The author knows no distinction between a wigwam and a tipi, although before writing an Indian book it would have been well had she learned that skin tipis were used only by the hunting tribes of the great plains. She also imagines a tipi hung with "gorgeous blankets of woven wool of many colors," while "hanging in a silken noose" from the wall was a "tomahawk, slim and supple as a damascus blade." She makes her "Kinibis" Indians use a "shimmering stone mirror" and cook in stone pots on the fire; the squaw sachem is made to speak a "peculiar lingo" composed of four Abnaki dialects, if one can imagine such a thing, while the wooing Indian swain conducted courtship with "wailing stringed instruments," which were unknown even to the Aztecs, Mayas, or Peruvians. From all this one may well wonder what impressions the young reader will gain of the "Kennibis" or any other Indians in the seventeenth century. Worse and more of it Nusingee was called on to make the designs for every "robe of state" or head-dress or "quiver-carrier" for young men about to be admitted to the circle of their elders. Fancy a white woman captive engaged in making the paraphernalia of a native warrior! Altogether the book is filled with so much nonsense and so many impossibilities that it will be well for youth to ignore it.

Hildegarde Hawthorne's "Mystery of Navajo Cañon" (Century: $2) is a story of two high-school boys, Dick and Jerry, from the East, who join Jerry's father, an archæologist engaged in excavating ancient Indian remains in the Navajo country of Arizona. Having befriended a Navajo chief during their journey by motor through New Mexico the boys strike up a close friendship with him on arriving at Jerry's father's camp. Through knowledge gained from this Indian the boys succeed in finding a hidden treasure with the skeleton of a Spaniard in armor—the mysterious "Iron Man" of the Navajo who had been abandoned by his companions and died in a cliff-dwelling four centuries ago. The boys had much trouble with two desperate white renegades who tried to find the treasure before them, but the rascals were defeated in their quest, the sheriff appearing on the scene in time to circumvent their threats and to settle old scores. The book is commendable; it is entertainingly written; it contains none of the incongruities which so often characterize story books about Indians, and one gains a very good picture of the country in which the adventure is staged because the author is familiar with the Navajo and with cliff-dwellings, and she has sniffed the scent of sagebrush.

"The Indian Twins," by Lucy Fitch Perkins (Houghton Mifflin: $1.75), is the twentieth of the author's series of "Twin" books of various lands and peoples. The twins in this case, Beaver Boy and Pigeon, eight years of age, belong supposedly to the Wahpeton Sioux—at least there is internal evidence of it—although the tribe is more or less nondescript. At any rate the twins' people lived in tipis in a land of pines in the far Northwest; they hunted buffalo, fished, gathered wild rice, made maple-sugar, used canoes and the travois, cultivated corn and potatoes, sang Navajo songs, and were enemies of the Ojibwa. The reader is left to guess who they were. At any rate, the story is delightfully told and will charm young children interestetd in the daily life of Indian youngsters of the long ago. The book is printed in large type and is prettily illustrated by the author, who, however, like so many others, insists on decorating the children's hair with war-feathers. But then we cannot expect all writers of Indian books to be James Willard Schultzes.



Conducted by MARION PONSONBY

THE UNKNOWN INDIAN. By GERTRUDE BELL BROWNE. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Co. 1930.

Reviewed by ERIC P. KELLY

IF, going back to "Orlando" (Mrs. Woolf, not Shakespeare), one can present in a single character the culture-substance of a whole race, Mrs. Browne has achieved such a result in the Indian character Occum in this excellent, unsentimental, and not too realistic book. It isn't a tale, nor a series of sketches, but is somehow a presentation, with story interest, illuminating the true lives of America's most colorful Indians, the Mohegans. Sixteen hundred and forty-two was the year, the background Connecticut with white folk at Harte-ford the settlement. The unknown Indian is the race symbol: he is exemplified in the list of succeeding chapters in much the manner that Charles B. Loomis once described the Indians of the Southwest.

The faults of Indian books are usually misinterpretations; the too keenly sympathetic, or the offhand, impersonal picture of "Redskins." This book has neither fault. It flows evenly with here and there a burst of poetry. The Indian is not the type we usually assume; he is emotional, though contained; not stoical, though not over-demonstrative. And while there are pictures that approach the idyllic, nature pictures, hunting, life in the woods, religion, there are other pictures in which no attempt is made to disguise the truth of warfare. Mrs. Browne in this her second Indian book has achieved a great evenness in a much disputed ground; it is a splendid book for older school children and indeed much of it makes excellent reading for younger children in the grades. Those parents who like to tell their children the truth, and teachers as well, will find this as good a book on the American Indian as it is possible to find.

THE EAGLES' NEST. By ISIS HARRINGTON. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1930.

Reviewed by ALTA B. APPLEGATE

MISS HARRINGTON'S book tells of the adventures of two Navajo boys while driving their fathers' flock of sheep and goats through the desert to the high pastures on the slopes of Mt. Taylor in New Mexico and what befell them after arriving there. The boys accompanied by a dog and a burro have exciting encounters with bobcats, wolves, wild burros, a bear, and predatory eagles, and discover Indian treasure in ancient cliff dwellers' ruins. No human enemies are met with by these two young Navajos, so that there are only animal villains to be circumvented: thus the blood and thunder element incident to many Indian stories is absent. The text, being simple and direct, can be followed easily by children from eight to ten years of age and even boys of fifteen will not find the story too juvenile to enjoy. However, since fictional books of this character are usually intended to be educational as well as entertaining, the author could have been a little more careful to authenticate her environmental material, and especially so, since she lives in the Southwest, and could have done so easily. Of course such details, though incorrect, do not detract from the interest of the story, but neither would they if correct.

For instance: It would be difficult to convince a Southwesterner that sheep or the hardy Navajo goats will eat the tough, fibrous spines of the small New Mexico yucca, or bayonet plant, or that even the most ingenious Navajo can built a good fire of it. Students of Indian customs know that owl feathers are used only by the most evil Indians in harmful or black witchcraft and that such Indians have been known to have been killed for even being suspected of having used them in this manner. Also that Navajos are notoriously superstitious concerning burial places and will go out of their way to avoid them. The cliff-dwellers were not the ancestors of the Navajos as the text implies. The latter are comparatively late-comers to the Southwest and their culture is quite different from that of the cliff dwelling precursors of the Pueblo Indians.

Two Poems

By ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

SHORE SONG

THE sea-gull curves his wings,
The sea-gull turns his eyes.
Get down into the water, fish!
(If you are wise.)

The sea-gull slants his wings,
The sea-gull turns his head.
Get down into the water, fish!
(Or you'll be dead.)

GARDEN RHYME

VIOLETS, daffodils,
Roses and thorn,
Were all in the garden
Before you were born.

Daffodils, violets,
And thorn and roses,
Your children's grandchildren
Will hold to their noses.

Reviews

PLAY THE GAME. By MITCHELL V. CHARNLEY. New York: Viking Press. 1931. $3.50.

IN the foreword to Mr. Charnley's book Fielding H. Yost, one of the best recognized authorities in the country on college athletics, has written: "Never since the days of the Greeks and the Romans has a nation been so interested in sports as are the American boys and young men today."

The truth of this prefatory remark emphasizes a factor that should lend popularity to a carefully abridged encyclopædia on sports. With sports in general numbering legions of actual participants and the major national phases grossing millions of dollars annually, it is hardly illogical to take it for granted that the average American makes a hobby of at least one branch of sport and is probably interested in two or three others. Further support for the supposition is seen in the fact that newspapers that fifteen years ago carried only a few columns relative to sports, today devote as many as six or eight pages to news of athletic activities, both local and foreign.

Such being the national popularity of sports, "Play the Game," roughly three hundred and fifty pages on sports, should appeal not only to boys, but also to readers long advanced beyond their 'teens. Studies on the attainment of par performances are discussed at varying lengths by outstanding authorities and stars. Baseball, football, basketball, track, and tennis are treated as the more important topics, with the minor sports given a proportionate amount of discussion. All together, sixteen sports are considered. In the cases of those of most importance to boys, different writers have contributed opinions from different angles. The result, though, does not give the effect of a coaching staff delivering blackboard talks to a team. Anecdotes concerning actual occurrences are freely interspersed throughout the book to illustrate some particular point. Moreover, in some instances, as in the case of a discussion on the use of football plays in which rival quarterbacks talk over a Yale-Princeton game, instructions are subtly imparted by unfolding the playing of contests. The partial use of the narrative form in "Play the Game" has removed the cut and dried text-book method of approach without destroying the informative value to be found in the usual athletic guide. Consequently, each topic discussed, instead of holding interest merely for the golfer, or skater, or basketball player, is, rather, of universal interest. This is a well-edited book.

MURDER AT BELLY BUTTE. By T. MORRIS LONGSTRETH and HENRY VERNON. Illustrated. New York: The Century Co. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by EDWIN L. SABIN

THE jacket and the cover title of this book promise a Western mystery story in the fiction line, until one opens to the title page, which adds: "and other mysteries from the records of the Mounted Police." The book therefore deals with facts, but it is no less interesting, for all that. The chapters involve the danger-trail, the long pursuit, and patient detective work of the highest order. And while the book may be listed among books for boys, to whose zest for adventure it will appeal, it is wholly adapted to their elders with the taste for a theme built around performances signalizing the triumph of close deduction, persistence, and nerve.

The fourteen chapters (one of which supplies the title) narrate thirteen criminal cases and cover practically all the territory, including the Yukon gold fields, served by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The scope of operations extends also into the States, for much of the work was done out of uniform. The criminals apprehended by dint of attention to the smallest of clues number not only murderers, but counterfeiters, narcotic peddlers, and other offenders against the laws of the Dominion; and they are Whites, Indians, Eskimos, and Orientals.

To single out any case as typical of the methods and achievements obtaining throughout the book is difficult. While the pursuit of the evil-doer might result in that man-hunt, in the wild open, which has formed the basis of so many stories of the Force, it also often demands keen analytical qualities in the following of obvious physical signs. By a start from a dulled key-ring tag, a cold and empty cartridge, a fragment of bone, the troopers of the Mounted, as detectives, finally run down their quarry. The demands of this work are wide. Sergeant Joy goes alone to the Eskimo of Baffin Island, where he at last locates and arrests the native murderer of Captain Bob Janes; and, again, we have the "Spanish Consul Case," which centers in Montreal where a smugglers' ring was active, and that "Contest in Ingenuity" between members of the Mounted and Chinese drug vendors in Vancouver.

Mr. Longstreth, one of the compilers of "Murder at Belly Butte," is known to readers, youths and adults, by reason of his preceding stories regarding to Royal Mounted. He also has written a history of the Force. Mr. Vernon is a Canadian authority upon the same topic. The eight full-page illustrations are by Bert Caldwell and E. J. Dinsmore.

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The Reader's Guide

By MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*

To D. H. A., Morganton, N. C., my anonymous benefactor in San Jose, Cal., and many others:

SEND no more gifts or greetings to John Walter. That gallant little life is over. There will be no more about him in the paper; I could write about old Mike, the British Museum cat, but not about young John. This is not fair to him; he earned a memorial. After all, life is life, and I would come off better than I expect at the Judgment Seat if I could give as good an account of the slice of it I have had as John can of his. Even to the end he helped me; several people have showed me how to live, and now a little cat has taught me how to die.

L. B. J., Blossburg, Pa., needs a biography of George Washington that would make interesting reading for a small club next February. "Naturally, we can not use one of the 'knock-him-off-his pedestal' variety; we aim for something warm, human, interesting, yet not offensive." And that, I fancy, disposes of Messrs. Woodward and Hughes; at least I gather that they would not fill this particular bill. Mrs. Shelby Little's "George Washington" (Minton, Balch) is well praised by historians; it is largely personal, interesting, and though not especially warm, leaves him a hero. John Corbin's "The Unknown Washington" (Scribner) is concerned especially with his part in the formation of the Constitution and his relationship with Jefferson and Hamilton, though it has new evidence on certain much-discussed episodes of his life; though candid it is not one of the debunking books. Though I scarcely think the club will be especially interested in Washington's military career, the fact that T. G. Frothingham's "Washington, Commander-in-Chief" (Houghton Mifflin) is the only modern book that devotes careful research and appraisal to his career as military chief of the American Revolution makes me include it here. There is also the charmingly written "George Washington's Country," by Marietta Minnegerode Andrews (Dutton), which combines history, local geography, legend, and personal tradition, and presents it pleasantly. I have no idea how many more works on the Father of his Country will be in print by the time the Great Celebration of next year breaks loose; I have only this to say, that if that Celebration keeps up as the program promises, every schoolchild in this fair land will be sick of the sound of his name by the first of next March.

L. B. D., Welland, Canada., has in contemplation the building of a windmill as a garden embellishment, and needs a work to set him right on design, dimensions, and proportions. It is not necesary that his windmill should work, but he wants it to look as if it could. This matter I set before one of those modest authorities on whom the reputation of this department for Knowing It All so largely depends, because they advise me and then won't let me quote them. He said that R. Thurston Hopkins's "Old Windmills of England" (Payson & Clarke) has many photographs of actual windmills and a few notes on dimensions. He also says that the man who knows most about old New England windmills is E. P. Hamilton, 14 Douglas Road, Lowell, Mass., who has not an idea that his name and address are in this column at this minute.

G. H., Pennsylvania, asks if there is a rather different sort of garden book, to give an enthusiast who may be expected already to own most of the well-known works.

TRY "The Scented Garden," by Eleanor Sinclair Rohde (Medico), which approaches the subject in the way many of us appreciate a garden—by way of the nose. That is, the book goes round the year by odorous plants and flowers, enchanting the sense with lovely description, giving plenty of practical advice, and closing with old recipes for flower perfumes and scent-bays, pot-pourri, pomanders, and the like, and directions for scenting gloves, tobacco, and even snuff, and for making candles to give out a beautiful smell. In short what someone called "the lost angel of the senses" has here a chance to get back into Paradise. Or you could take "Perennial Gardens," by H. Stuart Ortloff (Macmillan), a little book with everything one should know about the kind of garden that comes up every year in the same spot; or "What Greater Delight," by Dulcie Smith (Knopf), a book of familiar essays such as keen gardeners love to read either in a summer hammock or by a winter fire; most of its pictures are of actual gardens, but one shows a medieval tapestry of a crowd of gorgeous blooms and grazing among them a white unicorn. This should interest unicorn fanciers of this column. And finally there is Karel Capek's "The Gardener's Year" (Putnam), a delightful work for the amateur gardener.

W. L., New York, has just finished reading Barton's "God's Country" and thinks he would enjoy other works of satire, not necessarily contemporary.

IF you would follow from the twelfth to the twentieth century the course of a great English tradition, there is Hugh Walker's "English Satire and Satirists" (Dutton), and to supplement it one of the brief and usually sparkling Hogarth Lectures, "Notes on English Verse Satire," this one especially sparkling because it is by Humbert Wolfe; it attends compactly and competently to poets from Chaucer to Chesterton, Belloc, and the Sitwells.

But it is not so easy to unravel the satirist from the web of present-day literature. Most of the novelists are now satirists, at least some of the time, because most of us are at least somewhat dissatisfied most of the time. Aldous Huxley's "Point Counter Point" (Doubleday, Doran), is a satire; it is also a faithful reproduction, in fugue form, of how London life sounds to him. The difficulty some downright souls had with John Erskine's "Helen of Troy" and "Galahad" (Bobbs-Merrill) was that his satire wore unfamiliar clothing; by the time his later works came along it had worn the clothes thin. Robert Nathan has been a satirist from "Jonah" to "The Orchid"; satire gives coherence and direction to the realism of Sinclair Lewis. André Maurois—to step for a moment out of the language—showed what he could do in this line with his "Voyage to the Articoles" (Appleton) and I have often thought Abbé Dimnet must have a satire somewhere in his system, for all his helpfulness.

But for a beginning, get Ronald Knox's "Essays in Satire" (Dutton) to see how it should be done in rapier technique, the neat swordsmanship whose victim doesn't know his head is off till he sneezes. In this delightful volume you will find "Jael's Hammer," a discussion of church unity in the great sardonic tradition, and several amusing examples of higher criticism used with contemptuous ease for laughable purposes—for instance, the identification of the pseudo-Sherlock Holmes as indicated by internal evidence in the later books. For downright savage satire, gleefully biting its way through contemporary society, nothing beats Evelyn Waugh's "Decline and Fall" (Doubleday, Doran) and the even more carnivorous "Vile Bodies" (Cape-Smith) — but keep these away from the middle-aged; this meat is too strong for any but the young. High satire marks Hilaire Belloc's "Missing Masterpiece" (Harper), a spirited burlesque; it motivates Bruce Marshall's charming "Father Malachy's Miracle" (Doubleday, Doran); it fascinates the reader of Eimer O'Duffy's ingenious "King Goshawk and the Birds" (Macmillan) and his amazingly successful transportation of values in "The Spacious Adventures of the Man in the Street" (Macmillan). There is a verse satire in the manner of "The Rape of the Lock," published not so long ago by the Nonesuch Press, "A Stitch in Time," which I cannot be kept from including by the regrettable fact that I have ungratefully forgotten the author's name.

Much of the best American satire of today is entangled in parody, Donald Ogden Stewart's "Parody Outline of History" (Doubleday, Doran), for instance, or his "Perfect Behavior" (Doubleday, Doran). There is not much left of the follies of these United States when Edward Hope is done with them in "Alice in the Delighted States" (Dial). Then there are the spoofs sent out with the avowed or implicit purpose of putting an end to some form of literary expression of which the satirist has had more than enough; of these "The Cruise of the Kawa," by "Dr. Traprock," George Chappell (Putnam), not only put an end to a certain sort of South Sea bubble but made a beginning of a long line of elaborately organized parodies, not only Mr. Chappell's own, such as "My Northern Exposure" and "Through the Alimentary Canal with Rod and Gun" (Stokes), but Corey Ford's "Salt Water Taffy" (Putnam) which put the lid on Joan Lowell, his latest offering, "June in Africa," Phyllis Crawford's "Elsie Dinsmore on the Loose," and Wolcott's "Bird Life at the Pole" (Morrow). I must go buy me another copy of "The Cruise of the Kawa"; my own has long since followed someone else home, and I feel a need to meet once more in print the Fatu Liva bird.

Returning to the great tradition, the smashing effect of John Collier's "His Monkey Wife" (Appleton), a plain but far from simple story of a man who married a chimp, goes to show how strong the effect of genuine satire dealing with basic emotions and human relationships, will always be upon thinking and especially upon sophisticated people. Here is a book that took England by surprise — David Garnett's "Lady Into Fox" was no manner of preparation for it—and in America the devoted Emily, the chimp in question, has already devoted partisans. And to refer once more to a satire on America lately listed here, Eric Linklater's "Juan in America" (Cape-Smith) goes on the principle that truth, as collected by the tabloids, is strange enough to make fiction out of it.

M. L. B., Appleton, Wis., asks if there are small handbooks for the recognition of trees, like those for use with birds and wild flowers.

THE one I first think of, because it is the one I used for a summer in New Hampshire, is Harriet Keeler's "Our Native Trees" (Scribner); it is a decidedly good one, much used in schools and camps, but there are several others well worth owning. "What Tree Is That?" by E. G. Cheyney (Appleton), has an unusually rapid scheme of identification; the "Field Book of American Trees and Shrubs," by F. S. Mathews (Putnam), has, besides many pictures, maps showing distribution. These cost around three dollars; then there are the little handbooks with good but less elaborate pictures, such as the excellent "Key to the Wild and Commonly Cultivated Trees," by Collins and Preston (Holt), or C. C. Curtis's "Guide to the Trees" (Greenberg), or "Our Most Popular Trees," by L. N. Gilbert (Sully), with colored pictures; these cost around a dollar and a half. For the earnest student the "Manual of the Trees of North America," by C. S. Sargent (Houghton Mifflin: $12.50), is invaluable, and for readers interested in the social and economic side of the subject there is a comprehensive survey of "Trees as Good Citizens," by C. L. Pack (American Tree Association: $4), while anyone who wants to know what trees have had to do with religion, literature, history, and human life in general will find in "Forest Folklore, Mythology, and Romance," by Alexander Porteous (Macmillan), a collection of data from all over the world and for all times.

R. E. M., Lexington, Ky., is making a study of pioneer women in American novels of the twentieth century and asks for additions to a list already containing Willa Cather's "O Pioneers," Churchill's "The Crossing," Garland's "Trail-makers of the Middle Border," Rolvaag's "Giants in the Earth," Roberts's "The Great Meadow," Quick's "Vandemarck's Folly," and Aldrich's "A Lantern in Her Hand." The transplanting of a wife from Charles Town to the westward country, at the time of the American Revolution, is the theme of "Up Country," by Donald and Louise Peattie (Appleton); in Thomas Boyd's "Shadow of the Long Knives" (Scribner) a friend of the Indians of Ohio just before and during the Revolution has some difficulty in convincing his wife (a former captive) of the lovable qualities of Indians in general. Edna Ferber's pioneer country in "Cimarron" (Doubleday, Doran) is Indian Territory. Florence Everson and Effie Louise Power, in "Early Days in Ohio" (Dutton), describe the life of a pioneer family in the days of the Western Reserve, using authentic sources. In Vardis Fisher's "Toilers of the Hills" (Houghton Mifflin) there is a convincing picture of the conquest of the dry hill country of Idaho. In Sheba Hargreave's "The Cabin at the Trail's End" (Harper), Aunt Morning Ann brightens life in Oregon in the 'forties. There are pioneer women in John Fort's new novel, "God in the Straw Pen" (Dodd, Mead) as well as in his earlier "Stone Daugherty" (Dodd, Mead), in which the daughter of the title character plays an important part. Josephine Donovan's "Black Soil" (Stratford) concerns an Irish family pioneering in early Iowa. Gerald Johnson's "By Reason of Strength" (Minton, Balch) deserves to live by reason of its strong, sympathetic portrayal of a grand old pioneer, Grandma Whyte, and Caroline Snedeker's "The Beckoning Road" (Doubleday, Doran), for its lifelike picture of Owen's Utopia at New Harmony; this is a story for young people in that its heroine is young—she is the "Downright Dencey" of an earlier tale— but it should be in all our historical collections. There are many other novels of our pioneer life, but in these the part taken by women is stressed enough to fit them into this reading course. I hope it includes also the square-jawed epitaphs of pioneer women in "Spoon River Anthology." The continued success of "A Lantern in Her Hand"—the most popular of all the novels with pioneer heroines—directs attention to the author's new novel, "A White Bird Flying."

JUST to give an idea of the geographical distribution of devotees of Dr. Donne among readers of this department, the quotation about "some old lover's ghost" was sent in, on the second instalment of replies, from Yellow Springs, Ohio; Columbus, Ohio; Springfield, Mass.; Clinton, Illinois; Woods Hole, Mass.; Oakland, Maryland; Cleveland, Ohio; and New Orleans, Louisiana. Most of these had taken the trouble—clearly to them a pleasure—of copying out the four seven-line stanzas in full, most of them spoke of them with deep appreciation, and the book in which the verses appeared was given as "Songs and Sonnets" in The Muses Library (Lawrence & Bullen), "Seventeenth Century Lyrics," edited by Judson (University of Chicago Press), and the new Oxford edition of John Donne.

H. L., Jersey City, N. J., asks where one may find Clive Bell's essay on Proust. It is published in book form, "Proust," by Harcourt, Brace. *H. R. S., Urbana, Ill.,* believes that the *Saturday Evening Post* serial asked for is "The Great Van Sittart Mystery" by George Agnew Chamberlain, though the title may have been different when it appeared in the magazine. "Our family found it fascinating and read it aloud; the vivid pictures of changes in a certain section of the city—changes which formed a background for the plot and might be regarded as actors i —were the most enthralling part to r

M. T. R., New York, raises dahlias describes them in a catalogue that he "tries to make as good as it can be made." He asks who has described dahlias in literature. Edith Thomas has described them deathlessly in "Frost To-night," the poem Louis Untermeyer chooses to represent her in his "Modern American Poetry" (Harcourt, Brace).

I come to the velvet, imperial crowd,
The wine-red, the gold, the crimson, the pied,—
The dahlias that reign by the garden-side.

The cutting of dahlias, lavishly, grandly, as the last gesture of life before the frost of death, is the motive of this characteristic poem. I don't recall meeting this amazing and unaccountable flower elsewhere in literature; no doubt someone else will. I say unaccountable because we never know what will come up from dahlia seed.

Frank C. Reilly, producer of "Pickwick," which was presented on Broadway in 1927, is planning a musical version of that Dickens play to open late in October.

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Points of View

An Absurdity in King Lear

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Shakespeare's medical knowledge was, on the whole, extraordinarily accurate, and he applied his knowledge with fine judgment. But now and then, he, like all laymen, fell into an absurdity. A striking case in point is the description of the blinding of Gloster in "King Lear" (III. vii).

Modern editions of this play give no stage directions to explain how the Duke of Cornwall blinds Gloster at lines 67 ("Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot") and 82 ("Out, vilye jelly!"), even though they give such a superfluous stage-direction as "Regan pulls his beard" (at line 33). Presumably, the "business" is too terrible even for the printed page. But almost every reader of this scene gets the impression that Cornwall, without the use of any other instruments than his bare hands, tears out Gloster's eyeballs, throws them to the ground, and then crushes the little spheres with his foot. That this is the way the action has usually been interpreted is clear from the fact that Nicholas Rowe had the following stage direction at line 67: "Gloster is held down while Cornwall treads out one of his eyes." This was not explicit enough for Edward Capell; he suggested the following "business": "Gloster is held down in his Chair, while Cornwall plucks out one his Eye, and stamps on it." At line 82 Rowe gave the direction, "Treads out the other Eye"; Capell substituted for this the more melodramatic stage direction, "Dashing Gloster's other Eye to the Ground." Furness records no other method of dealing with Gloster's eyes.

Such business as the above is, as Shakespeare should have known, impossible. Without the aid of cutting instruments the human eyeball cannot be extracted from its socket. The eyeball is attached to the skull by muscles below, above, and at the sides; besides, it is held in position by the thick and strong optic nerve by which it is attached to the brain. Furthermore, the optic nerve is so integral a part of the eyeball that if the eyeball could possibly be pulled out nothing but a hollow collapsed shell would remain in the person's hand. (Shakespeare seems to have thought that the eyeball could be violently wrenched out of its socket and retain its character as a sphere.) But what is of even greater importance is the fact that such a violent tearing at the optic nerves would cause such a hemorrhage at the base of the brain as to cause instant death. But Shakespeare's Gloster does not die instantly; he is able to walk off and wander about the country.

SAMUEL A. TANNENBAUM, M.D.
New York, N. Y.

A Note on Cope

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Dr. Edward W. Berry concludes his admirable sympathetic review of Cope's life and work by Professor Osborn, in your issue of July 4th, with a paragraph which, while it is understandable in the light of the prominence given to vertebrate studies by Osborn and his colleagues, seems somewhat gratuitous, to say the least, in relation to the book under review. I hold no brief for Professor Osborn; but has he not made appropriate and sufficient references to the invertebrate part of the subject? Even in the subtitle the word "Paleontology" is limited by the adjective "Vertebrate." While Cope published a few papers on invertebrates, both living and in fossil (ten listed in the Bibliography), and made incidental collections of a few groups (as reported in the book!), his work was relatively, and in its more important aspects, entirely, confined to the vertebrates. It is, therefore, but natural that a distinguished vertebrate paleontologist—even one so broad-gauged as Professor Osborn—should write of another who imposed upon himself similar limitations without exaggerated reference to the invertebrates!

Cope used to say that he left these lowlier and earlier forms to his very competent colleagues Alpheaus Ayatt, W. H. Dall, and A. S. Packard, especially to the first named, among whom the invertebrate data received fair Lamarckian treatment; and this economical division of labor, in view of the enormous extent of both fields, worked out very well. It seems to me that Osborn does justice to this situation. Moreover, in the introduction on "Pioneers," a special section is devoted to the "Influence of Invertebrate Paleontology," with opening references to "fossil shells" from Aristotle to Leonardo da Vinci. Elsewhere in the book Osborn actually characterized Hyatt and Dall—(both purely invertebratologists) as "leading paleontologists"—without qualification! And Osborn *stresses* the greater range of Leidy's work, which included equally the invertebrates!—pointing out Cope's conspicuous hemi-specialization.

Of course, if the book had been further embellished with plates (as I should have preferred it to be), illustrating variations, developmental sequences, "directive evolution," etc., a few pictures of insects, shells, and the like might have given greater prominence to the invertebrates; but they would have been borrowed from the work of Cope's colleagues rather than from original exhibits—or discoveries—of his own. Cope used some of the plates of Beecher of Yale, if I correctly recall. I can imagine such an attractive and enhancing extension of the illustrations, but especially by way of exhibiting fossil and living *vertebrates*, outline drawings of series from Cope's monographs of the markings and dissections of snakes, lizards, etc.

True, the lay public might have been told and "shown" how extensive and various the invertebrates are, and how numerous their students; but such useful pedagogy would have involved at best a desirable and extraneous departure from the path pursued by Cope.

WILLIAM HARPER DAVIS.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

The article abstracted from my lecture on "The Art of Geoffrey Chaucer" in your issue of July 4 was printed without my knowledge, and consequently without an opportunity to pass in any way upon what was done with it. I must, then, since what I wrote was meant to be reasonably consecutive, point out that its drift is completely obscured by the omission after the first paragraph, without the obligatory indication that something has been left out, of seven pages; by other omissions, again without indication, at the beginning, the end, and in the body of several paragraphs; and by indicated omissions of matter essential to what follows. And changes of wording in a few passages have not been bracketed. Since the symbol of omission does fitfully occur, the reader can only suppose, when it does *not* appear, that he has before him the sequence—or, as it stands, the lack of sequence—of the writer's thought.

As written, the thing was designed to possess a certain unity. As thus garbled, however undesignedly, it has none. The fact that the lecture was delivered, not "at Oxford," but before the British Academy, is of minor importance.

JOHN LIVINGSTON LOWES.

Oxford.

[*Mr. Lowes's fine lecture was offered to* The Saturday Review *by the publisher with the understanding that the editors would be able to publish only a part. The excerption was made with the greatest care, and an additional note called attention to the fact of excerption, and to the forthcoming publication in America by the Oxford Press of the whole lecture. Unfortunately, a few indications of omission noted on the manuscript were dropped out by the printer in the final proof. For this we apologize, but we feel that, however partial, the extract printed did more justice to Mr. Lowes's scholarship and critical ability than he realized on first reading.—The Editors.*]

John Greenleaf Whittier

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

I have been writing a life of John Greenleaf Whittier, the poet, and would like to hear from such of your readers as have manuscript letters from him in their possession. If these are sent to me they will be copied and returned. If any of your readers should perchance consider them too valuable to forward by mail, I would appreciate *bona-fide* copies of them.

ALBERT MORDELL.

731 Land Title Building
Philadelphia, Pa.

Authors interested in regional and folk material are reminded by the University of Oklahoma Press that August 25th is the deadline for the third volume of its regional annual, *Folk Say*, 1931. *Folk Say* publishes stories, sketches, and articles of from 5,000 to 10,000 words, long poems, and groups of poems interpreting regional backgrounds, customs, characters, beliefs, and legends. Manuscripts should be addressed to B. A. Botkin, editor, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma. No payment is made for contributions.

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The Colonial Printer

THE COLONIAL PRINTER. By LAWRENCE C. WROTH. New York: The Grolier Club. 1931.

THIS is the most scholarly book on printing which has been written by an American author since the appearance of Updike's "Printing Types" in 1921: it will stand with the small list of really worth while contributions to the history of the craft if for no other reason than that it is most carefully and conscientiously written.

Mr. Wroth's treatment of his subject is minute and particular even to technical details difficult for a layman to appreciate, and even more difficult for him to write about. One realizes that Mr. De Vinne and Mr. Updike possessed the great advantage of a first-hand knowledge of the craft: but as they both made themselves familiar with the scholar's tools, so Mr. Wroth has handled the printer's tools with understanding and accuracy. I may over-emphasize this point, but too many people, in Kipling's phrase, "mishandle technicalities."

The book deals with the Colonial printer's tools and with his product. Specifically: The First Presses of the Colonies, the Printing House, the Printing Press, the Type Faces, Ink, Paper, Workmen, Trade Conditions, Bookbinding, Product. There are copious notes, a short book list of works quoted, and an index. There are fifteen illustrations of type founding, paper making, printing, etc., as well as of Abel Buell's first American type, a title-page of William Parks's printing office at Williamsburg, an early binding, etc.

On the technical side, Mr. Wroth's chapter on the kind of printing-press in use in the colonies is of great interest: he points out, and supports his statement with proof, that the press was the ordinary "common press," and neither the Blau nor the Ramage machines which are frequently assumed to have been in use. This may seem a minute point, but in view of the very important part which the press played in the product of the printing-office, it is a point worth the investigation.

There is a very interesting set of tables showing the amount of type in various offices and the sizes in use. Little attention is given to the specific *faces* employed, but some information on that score is available in Updike. There is, however, considerable about Amos Buell, the first maker of type in this country—a subject treated at length in the same author's "Abel Buell of Connecticut," published by the Acorn Club in 1926.

The chapters on General Trade Conditions and on Bookbinding in Colonial America are contributions of much value in the history of printing in America.

One rises from a reading of the chapter on the Product of the Press with an increased respect for the work of the colonial printer. As Mr. Wroth says, "that room of 15,000 almanacs in the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester is at once a monument and a shrine." The production of almanacs was only one portion of the activity of the press: there is no branch of learning which was not fostered by the colonial printer, and at what a cost of labor and pains and difficulties only those can realize who have tried hand-press printing even with the advantages of the nineteenth century iron press. If the work was not of the highest quality in design and execution (and I can hardly share Mr. Wroth's somewhat too favorable criticism of it) it remains true, I think, that the eighteenth century newspaper was a remarkably handsome piece of printing. Furthermore, the Colonial printer did not survive until the desolating break up of the styles in the early nineteenth century: the traditions of good craftsmanship in type were his, and if his faces and fonts were few in number, they were, especially after the types of Caslon became available in America, unimpeachable in quality.

It is perhaps unfortunate that this book has been issued by a private book club, since the information which it holds is of the greatest interest and value to all students of printing in America, but by reason of that peculiarity of publication, we have a book which does credit to the practice of the art. Mr. Updike has printed the book in his most excellent way, as an octavo volume of some two hundred and seventy-five pages. It is, as one would surmise, an unostentatious volume on good paper, bound in cloth back and paper sides, with gold stamping. The type is that ample font known as Brimmer, with the copious notes in Oxford. There is an adequate index. If the current production of finely printed books has made the missionary work of the Grolier Club seem less necessary than formerly, there is yet an ungrasped opportunity in this country for the production of fine scholarly editions in comparable typography, on subjects of typographic interest: this book is an earnest of what may be done.

R.

Aucassin and Nicolette

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE in English by ANDREW LANG. Designed and illustrated by VOJTECH PREISSIG. New York: Limited Editions Club. 1931.

MR. PREISSIG, whose work I find it difficult at times to sympathize with, has done an unusual and, despite its mannerisms, a most attractive book. For to do Andrew Lang's fine and familiar translation of the old French classic in a new way is at least a triumph, and to have so blended the old story with extremely modern pictures, and do it successfully, is definitely to contribute something to typographic activity.

For it is by the pictorial treatment that this book will be judged: Mr. Preissig's type, in the small size here used, is readable and clear—which is all that can be asked of type. That it possesses at the same time a quaintness of form is in its favor. But an idea of the pictures may be suggested by saying that for the most part the figures are in modern dress—no less an innovation than was Hamlet in contemporary clothing: the lovers appear on the last page before the priest being married, she in almost conventional wedding dress, he in black coat—but not, thank God, in striped trousers or ascot tie! And so it goes through the book. Nicolette picks the flowers in a sport sweater: Aucassin "lays hand to sword a-smiting them right and left" in the uniform of a cavalry soldier of the present day! This will set the critics carping—but to me it seems good and welcome.

The book is full of pictures, and all in colors—bright and attractive colors, which, with the outline drawings, make for clarity and vivacity. The fact is that the nature and modernity of the pictures lifts the story out of the archaism which sometimes wearies the reader. Lang wrote that he had attempted, "if not old English, at least English which is elderly, with a memory of Mallory." It does no injustice to either Lang or Mallory to help make the fine old story live anew for many new readers.

The printing has been done on hand made paper by the Statni Tiskána in Prague, and bound in highly decorated cloth boards. Altogether this is a positive note in modern book making which is wholly commendable and makes the second outstanding book in the Limited Editions Club's second year—the "English Opium Eater" being the other.

R.

Americana

LAST ADVENTURE. San Francisco in 1851. Translated from the original journal of Albert Benard de Russailh by CLARKSON CRANE. San Francisco: The Westgate Press. 1931. $9.

FOR this account by a Frenchman who went to the Coast in 1851, did journalistic work, and died a little more than a year later, the Grabhorn Press has done a clever and difficult book. It is a small octavo, carefully set and printed—though I should question the use of such dreadful shaded black-letter as in the title and binder's stamp! There are seven contem-

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porary lithographs, from originals found in the journal, very skilfully reproduced on colored paper. The verisimilitude extends to the inside front cover and first fly leaf, where matter found in the MS. journal is reproduced in facsimile. Other than the atrocious black-letter, there is only one fault to be found with the book—the lack of an index.

True to the manners and customs of his adopted city, Russailh was successively (in fifteen months, remember) carpenter, merchant, corrupter of customs officials, watch salesman, speculator in toothpicks, journalist, contractor, saloon keeper, and dramatist! Here is material for an exciting book, and the publishers' assertion that present-day readers will find it entertaining in the extreme is borne out by the contents.

R.

THE RED INDIAN. Currier & Ives Prints, No. 2. With an introduction by W. S. HALL. New York: William Edwin Rudge. 1931. $2.25.

HERE are reproduced in full color eight of the old Currier and Ives prints of the Red Indian. Reproduction by the half-tone process does not, of course, do full justice to the lithographed originals—but as reference material this series is admirable. There is a bibliographical note, list of Currier & Ives Indian prints, and a full introduction.

R.

Some Reprints

THE LEAP OF ROUSHAN BEG. By H. W. LONGFELLOW. A complete facsimile, edited with introduction and notes by ARTHUR CHRISTY. New York: William Edwin Rudge. 1931. $5.

IT was one of Longfellow's methods of composition to write each stanza on a separate slip of paper, and then arrange these in the order which best suited him. This may seem a somewhat singular way to write verse, but it is these separate slips of Roushan Beg which are here reproduced in facsimile from the originals in Cragie House, Cambridge. Each slip is shown at the top of the page, with a type set-up beneath.

There is considerable editorial matter included, as well as some hitherto unpublished material.

This edition is a thin quarto, bound in red cloth. Mr. Frederic Warde has designed the book, and three hundred copies have been printed.

R.

(COMIC BACKGAMMON) BACKGAMMON: Its History and Practice. By the Author of "Whist." New York: The Barry Vail Facsimiles. 1931.

I MUST get this review written before the revival of backgammon has ceased to be a revival and becomes a subsidence—along with miniature golf and mah-jong. I can't remember how they played the game in the thirteenth century (though there is a picture in this book showing how they did) but I well remember Ben Manning, the bachelor harness maker, who lived across the street from our house when I was a boy and played the game alone, right hand against the left. I always preferred the game to tiddledy-winks or ping-pong or pigs-in-clover or even parcheesi—but *chacun a son jeu.*

This little book is a facsimile reprint of the first issue of 1844 (London, D. Bogue, 86 Fleet Street), and it gives not only the history and the practice of the game, but in the best Victorian manner quotes appropriately at each chapter head from the poets. It is an amusing little book, with humorous pictures and a reminiscent red cloth binding.

Grimm's Fairy Tales

FAIRY TALES by the BROTHERS GRIMM. Woodcuts by FRITZ KREDEL. Introduction by HARRY HANSEN. New York: Limited Editions Club. 1931.

FOR the Limited Editions Club one of the foremost German typographers and designers has arranged an edition of eleven of the old favorite fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm. It may be said at once that there are three impediments to the immediate acceptance of the book by those of us who were brought up on Grimms' fairy tales: the printing of the book is manifestly superior to what we were accustomed (which is our misfortune), it is pretty definitely "Germanic" (which after all may or may not damn it), and Little Red Riding-hood has become Little Red-cap (a liberty which can in no wise be condoned).

I am curious to see how a modern child will like the book, for it is impossible for a grown-up to quite like it. As a piece of book making it has its points, though. The wood cuts are hand colored, the type is light and graceful, and the leather binding looks as if it would stand a good deal of abuse from childish hands. And in general it is far superior to the get-up of the usual "juvenile."

R.

An Iceland Fisherman

AN ICELAND FISHERMAN. By PIERRE LOTI. Translated by Guy Endore. Lithographs by Yngve Berg. New York. Limited Editions Club. 1931.

CONTINUING its present programme of issuing books from foreign presses, the Limited Editions Club has sent out Loti's story of the Iceland Fisherman in an edition printed by Norstedt & Söner in Stockholm and designed by Akke Kumlein. The type and format do not seem to be particularly distinguished, though the type is of a good size and readable, and the paper is van Gelder.

The lithographs are well executed but seem a trifle vague. On the whole the book is a very decent printing of a classic, without very definite virtues or faults.

R.

THE CRIES OF NEW YORK. New York: The Harbor Press. 1931.

THIS is a collected volume of the monthly Cries sent out several years ago by the Harbor Press. All of the Cries from the earliest known editions of 1808, and five others from the edition of 1814 are included. There are thirty-two illustrations redrawn from the original wood blocks, and the text is well printed on good paper and bound in flowered paper boards. R.

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW. By WASHINGTON IRVING. Illustrated with original etchings by BERNHARDT WALL. New York: Cheshire House. 1931.

THE latest of the Cheshire House editions is the old favorite by Irving. It was perhaps wise to keep the typography simple. The Caslon-set pages are well proportioned, the paper is soft, pleasantly toned, and the simplicity extends to the binding, which is in crash, with flat back, ink stamped.

The etchings by Mr. Wall are well done and fit the character of the book well. If they are not distinguished pieces of work they are at least satisfactory and worth doing.

The edition is a pleasant one to have.

R.

THE first number of the Huntington Library *Bulletin* (May 1931), just issued by the Harvard University Press, is admittedly miscellaneous in its subject-matter. With the intention of assisting students by indicating the extent of the library's resources, the editors have devoted seventy-four pages to a list, arranged by date of accession, of all the collections the late H. E. Huntington acquired during his lifetime. This is, of course, excellent: only vague general impressions have existed in the minds of many individuals about them, and such a summary is most imposing and useful. There is always difficulty in any periodical published by an institution of finding material interesting to outsiders: libraries are notoriously self-centered, and seldom realize that no one else is likely to become as excited over their possessions as they are themselvs. With the Huntington Library, however, the case is different: it is reasonably well-known that no other foundation—except, in a smaller way, the John Rylands Library of Manchester, England—has ever begun its career of public service with such an accumulation of books and manuscripts, resembling very much a union-list of the extraordinary things in the Bodleian, the British Museum, the Hain-Coppinger "Repertorium Bibliographicum," and the "Short-title Catalogue" of the English Bibliographical Society. Curiosity has always been thoroughly aroused about it, and the *Bulletin* is an admirable means of satisfying this desire for information: it is only to be regretted that, in the present issue, the brief account of Mr. Huntington's life should sound as if it had been written as a Memorial Report for a directors' meeting. For the future numbers the editors plan to publish bibliographical descriptions of the more unusual books in the library, and various special studies based on material in the library's possession.

G. M. T.

THERE is no reason to doubt the present success of the *Book-Collector's Quarterly:* three numbers have now appeared, and as each one has been uniformly good, it is almost possible to assume that the future issues will be quite as entertaining and interesting. The essays are unusually well done, particularly Viscount Esher's "American or English?" in the second number (a paper that deserves to be read with the greatest attention by everyone who collects modern writers); various subjects have been discussed; and the entire periodical gives the impression of being managed by editors who know what they want to do. The First Editions Club of London, by realizing the need for such a publication, and by bringing it into existence, has earned the gratitude of many bewildered individuals: American collectors should subscribe to it as soon as possible. The address is Cassell and Company, Ltd., London, E. C. 4.

G. M. T.

Music at Night

MUSIC AT NIGHT and Other Essays. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. New York: The Fountain Press. 1931. $10.

THE Pynson Printers have done an interesting thing with this book: they have made use of that small, clear, heavy-face type which in a somewhat similar face is now almost universally used by the newspapers. The typewriter has accustomed us to such monotone type face, and there is no reason why it should not be used for many classes of books. It is not lovely, but it is legible and especially so in the small sizes. It is not a new kind of type (as Ionic it has been in the type books for the better a century), but its use as a body somewhat novel. And it has a fresh as a book letter.

This book is really interesting typographically without being in the least freakish or bizarre. It has a title-page which leaves much to be desired: I should have preferred to see the same typographic style adhered to there as elsewhere. The binding is in marbled paper boards and cloth back, with paper label. Each of the five hundred copies is signed by the author. R.

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Publishers, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York

Early in 1931, when the Spring catalogue was released, your correspondents inaugurated an *Inner Sanctum Prediction Contest.* Clients of this column were invited to forecast which publications would have (a) the greatest literary and critical success and (b) the widest sales.

Now that the Spring season is officially over, tentative results* can be unofficially tabulated:

LEADERS IN ACCLAIM
Men of Art by THOMAS CRAVEN
The Pure in Heart by FRANZ WERFEL
Hard Lines by OGDEN NASH
A Night in Kurdistan by JEAN RICHARD-BLOCH
Adventures in Genius by WILL DURANT
The Adventure of Science by BENJAMIN GINZBURG

LEADERS IN SALES
Men of Art† by THOMAS CRAVEN
Hard Lines by OGDEN NASH
Adventures in Genius by WILL DURANT
The Pure in Heart by FRANZ WERFEL
A Night in Kurdistan by JEAN RICHARD-BLOCH
The Adventure of Science by BENJAMIN GINZBURG

Final returns are now being checked and the most successful prophet will soon receive from *The Inner Sanctum* a complete autographed set of all the books in the catalogue, together with a humble petition for expert lessons in prognostication.

If any readers are interested in a similar prediction contest for the Summer and Fall publications, they are cordially invited to send for the new catalogue, marking their requests, *Inner Sanctum.*

ESSANDESS.

* [*Not counting Puzzle Books, etc.*]
† [*Including Book-of-the-Month distribution*]

HARRY HANSEN
reviews
a Book for Bookmen

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25 West 45th Street
New York City

The PHŒNIX NEST

HAVING resigned from the Foreign Office about the time of his "Portrait of a Diplomatist" (Houghton Mifflin) *Harld Nicolson* is now broadcasting regularly on current events and doing a weekly book page for the *Evening Standard.* From his rooms in the Temple he can step into Fleet Street or the Strand at a moment's notice. . . .

Christopher Morley has been appointed to a Rosenbach Lecture Fellowship in Bibliography at the University of Pennsylvania and will deliver a series of addresses under the auspices of the university during the fall and winter. . . .

Island House enters the publishing field with three limited editions of two hundred copies each to be released this fall. On September first it will issue "Sweet like Salvation," poems of *Herman Specter,* with an introduction by *Michael Gold.* This will be Specter's first book. On October first it will bring out "The Sphinx," a poetic play by *Samuel Loveman,* and on November first, "Both Banks of the Jordan," poems by *Nicholas Worth,* being the work of a young modern hitherto unpublished. *William Goldmann* is in charge of the offices of Island House, which is established at 132 East 60th Street. . . .

We are told that no historically-minded visitor to London should be content without paying a call on the novelist, *Henrietta Leslie,* who lives in one of the most interesting old houses in the famous Chelsea district. Glebe House, as her home is called, is unique in that it contains the relic of a Huguenot Chapel—a rotunda with a vaulted glass dome, and diminutive Gothic windows evidently added at some later period. Up through the floor grows a fig-tree which spreads its branches and delicate green leaves like some tropical vine over the heads of unbelieving visitors. The old powder closet, in which wigs and hair were unmercifully dusted, has been converted by Miss Leslie into a small library in which tea and scones are served in front of a cheering coal fire. The walls are done in azure blue, copper and brass glisten on the hearth, and the only daylight admitted sifts down through two smoky skylights in the ceiling. Miss Leslie is now well along on her new novel which is to succeed her "Mrs. Fischer's War," which was selected by the Book League of America. . . .

Ben de mier Miller of Washington, writes us that when we spoke on July 11th of the destination of the *Charles Edward Russells* as Switzerland we erred in that he had received a letter from them in June saying that they were about to sail for Scandinavia. . . . .

Nancy Barr Mavity, the well-known detective story writer, whose biography of *Aimée Semple McPherson* Doubleday, Doran will publish toward the end of September, has gone to spend her vacation on the Continent. *Genevieve Taggard,* the poet and biographer of *Emily Dickinson,* who recently received a Guggenheim Fellowship, sends us a postal from the island of Capri, where she and her sister and small daughter are for the summer. . . .

Niña Jay Dusenberry postals:

What would *you* name two blue love birds if you already had a psychopathic canary, Dr. Sigmund Freud, and an incestuous pair of paradise fish, Byrin and Augusta, parents of a school of microscopic Medoras? Do you favor Paolo and Francesca? My best red garters as a prize if you'll think up a better.

This gaiety is apparently caused by the fact Miss Dusenberry is at present at Oak Beach near the booming Great South Bay.

Eve Garrett Grady, recently expelled from Russia because she included a joke on *Stalin* in a magazine article, has written a book on Russia for Brewer, Warren & Putnam. It is called "Seeing Red," and was published on July 3rd. Why not the Fourth of July? . . .

We hear that, in the new number of *This Quarter, Yvor Winters* takes a crack at all his contemporaries and disposes of them neatly. What on earth could left-wing writers find to do if they weren't able to write about their contemporaries? . . .

We should like to call attention to The Translation Publishing Company, Inc., of 76 Fifth Avenue, this city. They are the only company whose business is exclusively publishing and handling translations and dictionaries, and they are prepared to supply any translation that is published. We have received no emolument for calling these facts to your attention. We merely think the information may be useful to you. . . .

Louis Untermeyer forwards us a circular received by him from the Three Worlds Press advertising that "Romanticism still lives!" in the shape of a book by Robert R. Hull entitled, "The Perfect Love and Other Poems." "Order this Volume now," runs the screed, "Which Flings Defiance in the Face of a Practical World of Business Men and Politicians and Fearlessly Lifts up the Standard of Idealism." Later on it remarks, "Unless you have altogether lost the HUMAN FORM, the true inwardness of a normal man or woman, you will respond to this poetry. Besides, it is a good cause. Help the author defeat Satan, the Accuser, who is the God of this world and leads forces of spiritual obstruction." And all this in this hot and humid weather!

Coward-McCann think that our recent item concerning *Thornton Wilder's* plays might puzzle some of our readers. We misplaced the decimal point, and the truth is that the trade edition of "The Long Christmas Dinner" is two-fifty, *not* twenty-five dollars. For that would make it cost twice as much as the edition signed by the author, and an *unsigned* book is not yet a collector's item. . . .

Thelma Lull sends us a copy of *The Husk,* published by the English Club of Cornell College at Mount Vernon, Iowa. *Clyde Tull,* has been head of the English Department out there through the life of the magazine. About half the contents of each issue are written by undergraduates. The illustrations and the cover designs are also their work. . . .

Now we're starting for California with our banjo on our knee. We just can't seem to stay put. Au revoir.

THE PHŒNICIAN.

From the pen of a *grande dame*....

Years Of Plenty

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The AMEN CORNER

"Music has charms to soothe the savage breast."

The Oxonian wishes to explain at once that he has two good excuses for allowing himself to begin with such a well-worn quotation. The first is that it is generally misquoted (it is not "hath"), and the second, that few people know that it is the opening line of Congreve's tragedy, *The Mourning Bride.*[1] We had forgotten it ourselves until we read Mr. D. Crane Taylor's *William Congreve,*[2] the first biography of that brilliant and witty man for some years. But it is music and not Congreve that we are thinking of just now, and of the outdoor concerts that now help make the summer bearable from New York to California.

The Verdi *Requiem* has figured prominently in these concerts for the last year or two, and now we understand that in European musical circles the Verdi revival gathers momentum rapidly. We had already gained a new view of him from Ferruccio Bonavia's *Verdi* which the Oxford University Press brought out some months ago. It is the first life of Verdi based on his recently published *Copialettere*—the book containing copies of the letters he wrote, kept for his own reference.

Here is a bit of Mr. Bonavia's Preface which sums up the case as well as it could possibly be done:

"The portrait they reveal is complete to the last detail; and when we have read through the seven hundred pages of the *Copialettere,* we no longer wonder how it came about that so typical a man of the theatre as Verdi chose, while he was too young for a patriarch and too human for a philosopher, to pass the greater part of his life in the seclusion of the country, away from towns, with neither sea nor Alp to break the monotony of the landscape, seeking no one's favor or company. The letters reveal also the rare moral greatness of a man who was scrupulous in the observance of his duty, whose honesty was not bounded by conditions and circumstances, whose benefactions were known only to their recipients. Had Verdi not been a composer, he might have forfeited his claims to remembrance, but he would have still been a great man."

This is a book to read at home, but you can carry about with you in your pocket Rosa Newmarch's *Concert-Goer's Library of Descriptive Notes,*[3] which are technical enough without being too technical, and explain delightfully without unnecessary embroidery. *The Listener's History of Music,*[4] by Percy A. Scholes is another indispensable work. And in Carnegie Hall last spring we overheard two musicians warmly praising *The Musical Pilgrim.*[5] That, as we hope you know, is a series of little paper books consisting of analytical studies by well-known authorities of works, groups of works, or composers, ranging from *The Musical Design of "The Ring,"* by A. E. F. Dickinson, with musical examples, and *Debussy and Ravel,* by F. H. Shera, to *Bach: The Mass in B Minor,* by Charles Sanford Terry. A recent addition to the series is Eric Blom's The Rose Cavalier, which will delight all lovers of Strauss.

One has only to mention Dr. Terry's name to think of his great biography of *Bach,*[6] his delightful study of *John Christian Bach*[7] (The "English" Bach), and of his most recent *Bach: The Historical Approach*[8].

A book which we look forward to with keen anticipation and which is to be published soon is Alfred Cortot's *French Piano Music*[9]. M. Cortot, probably the foremost of French pianists, describes these studies as "the notes of a pianist wishing to share his impressions, and to create in the listener a mental receptivity similar to his own." The essays deal with the piano music of Debussy, Franck, Faure, Chabrier, and Dukas, and will be of interest to listener and player alike.

But we cannot begin to tell you of all the fascinating books for the music lover to be found in the library of the Oxford Press[10].

THE OXONIAN.

Our Book of the Month: Verdi, by Ferruccio Bonavia. $3.

(1) *World's Classics* 80c. Also *The Comedies of Congreve.* Introduction by Bonamy Dobree. 80c. (2) $4.50. (3) 3 vols. $1.50 each. (4) 3 vols., illustrated, $1.50 each. (5) 75c each. (6) $7.50. (7) $8.50. (8) $2.50. (9) $3.00. (10) 114 Fifth Avenue.

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